University Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes

The University Education Committee has approved the 2010/2011 revision of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes which was prepared by the University Graduate Studies Committee (UGSC) and the Education Support Unit (ESU) during 2009-2010.

The Regulations and Code are based on existing good practice and take into account internal and external developments affecting taught postgraduate programmes. An electronic copy of the Regulations and Code are available at: http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/pg/pgtcodeonline.html

The purpose of the Code is to summarise the University's intentions for:

- the management of the taught postgraduate programmes it offers;
- the academic standards of the taught postgraduate awards it confers; and
- the support provided for taught postgraduates.

The sections of the Regulations and Code in boxes contain the University's minimum requirements for the management, delivery and support of taught postgraduate programmes. These are necessarily generic, as Education Committee recognises that there will be local good practice that supplements the threshold standards and reflects subject needs. An electronic version of the Regulations and Code, which is downloadable by schools and faculties, is also available, to enable insertion of additional information where appropriate, so as to provide relevant staff and students with a document that combines University requirements with local guidance.

The Code and the associated Regulations covering taught postgraduate degrees is reviewed and updated annually. Please send any comments or suggestions to the ESU (esu-info@bris.ac.uk).

With best wishes,

Professor Avril Waterman-Pearson
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)
# Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes

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These Regulations and Code of Practice apply to all taught postgraduate degrees listed in the University Charter, Acts, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations 2010-11 (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/rules-regulations/list-taught.pdf). Please note that some programmes have separate regulations which supplement the regulations in this Code.¹

These Regulations and Code contain the rules and guidelines for the management of taught postgraduate degree programmes, information about the mechanisms for assuring the academic standards of taught postgraduate degrees and the support arrangements for taught postgraduate students. The sections of the Regulations and Code outlined in boxes throughout the text have the status of University Regulations, approved by Education Committee under the delegated authority of Senate and must be adhered to.

The role of the Regulations and Code is to maintain the quality and academic standards of the University's taught postgraduate degrees and to provide guidance in the form of clear principles for taught postgraduates and staff in schools.

As well as setting out the University's requirements, the Regulations and Code aims to provide helpful information for all users, including details of current internal policies and practice and alignment with external expectations.

All students registered on taught postgraduate programmes, Heads of School and Faculty Graduate Education Directors receive a copy of the Regulations and Code. All other staff such as programme and unit directors, dissertation supervisors and directors of graduate studies are encouraged to access the Regulations and Code on the University website at: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/pg/pgtcodeonline.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. Examples of good practice may be sent to the Education Support Unit at any time for incorporation into the Code.

**Changes from the previous edition**

This 2010/2011 edition of the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes includes the following minor amendments:

- Section 9 – Clarification of the credit points for dissertations.
- Section 9.7 – Clarification of dissertation re-submission procedures and the role of the Faculty Examination Board.
- Annex 5 - A link to the list of Taught Postgraduate Programmes at M Level in the Charter, Acts, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations 2010-11 replaces Annex 5 (see above).
- Annex 8 – a number of minor revisions have been made to the Admissions Principles for Postgraduate Taught Programmes.
- In addition, throughout the document, revisions have been made to replace ‘department’ with either ‘school’ or ‘subject’ to reflect the University’s structural changes. Where appropriate, changed job titles and divisions have been renamed and references to the Postgraduate Union have been deleted.

A detailed summary of these changes can be found on the ESU website: http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/pg/

¹ These are the professionally-accredited programmes: MClinDent; PGCE; and MSc in Social Work.
1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Regulations and Code

The purpose of these Regulations and Code is to set out the University’s intentions for the:

- management of taught postgraduate degree programmes;
- academic standards of taught postgraduate awards; and
- support provided to students on taught postgraduate programmes and to staff who teach them.

The Regulations and Code therefore contain:

- rules for the management of programmes;
- the mechanisms that exist to assure the academic standards of taught postgraduate qualifications;
- details of the amount of academic and pastoral support provided and the ways in which support is offered;
- procedural information.

They have been approved by Education Committee and developed by the University Graduate Studies Committee (UGSC) and the Education Support Unit (ESU) with contributions from programme directors and students and are based on good practice in postgraduate education identified within the University and externally. The Regulations and Code are for use by:

- programme directors, unit directors, personal tutors and dissertation supervisors of taught postgraduate students
- taught postgraduate students
- other staff with responsibilities relating to taught postgraduate programmes and students
- examiners of taught postgraduate degrees

The sections of the Code outlined in boxes throughout the text contain the University’s regulations and minimum requirements/responsibilities for taught postgraduate programmes.

1.2 Decision-making framework

Graduate Education Directors

Each faculty has a Graduate Education Director (often known as a Graduate Dean). Their generic job description is at: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/groups/graddeans/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/groups/graddeans/). Individual Graduate Education Directors may have additional duties, depending on faculty needs and structures. The primary role of the Graduate Education Director is to support the Dean of his/her faculty in managing postgraduate education and maintaining the academic standards of postgraduate, including taught postgraduate, degree programmes. This includes interacting with and supporting postgraduate students and staff with responsibilities for postgraduates. The Graduate Education Director chairs the faculty Graduate Studies Committee (or equivalent), which deals with all matters relating to taught postgraduate students, and the relevant Faculty Graduate Examination Board (or equivalent).

Graduate Education Directors also have collective University responsibilities that include helping to develop and implement policy for postgraduate education, in liaison with academic and support service staff. The committees to which they contribute at University level are listed as part of the Graduate Education Directors' job description.
University Graduate Studies Committee
The Graduate Education Directors are members of the University Graduate Studies Committee (UGSC). The UGSC's terms of reference are at: http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/groups/graddeans/. The UGSC is responsible for the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes, and individual Graduate Education Directors are responsible for liaising with Faculty Quality Assurance Teams (FQATs) and schools to ensure that these are implemented. This role includes the Graduate Education Directors assuring themselves and the University that arrangements for taught postgraduate programmes are aligned with the Regulations and Code.

Education Committee
Recommendations made by the UGSC are considered by the University Education Committee, one of four standing committees of Senate (along with the Research Committee, University Planning and Resources Committee and Senate Standing Committee). Education Committee is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) and is responsible for developing and implementing policy in respect of both undergraduate and postgraduate education in the University. Education Committee is also responsible for overseeing all quality assurance matters for all academic programmes.

Faculty Examination Boards
Each Graduate Education Director chairs his/her respective Faculty Examination Board, which awards taught postgraduate degrees, and ensures that there is fair and consistent treatment of mitigating circumstances and plagiarism and cheating cases within the faculty. The Faculty Examination Board reports to the Faculty Board and notifies award and re-submission results to the Examinations Office, which updates students’ award records and produces award certificates. In some faculties, the Graduate Studies Committee is also a Faculty Examination Board.

Faculty Graduate Studies Committees (or Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee)
Each Graduate Education Director chairs his/her respective Faculty Graduate Studies Committee, which considers new academic policy (disseminating this within the faculty) and oversees new and revised programme and unit proposals prior to submission for University level approval. Committee members normally include academic representatives of taught postgraduate and research postgraduate programmes from each school. It advises the Faculty Board and Faculty Planning and Resources Committee on all aspects of postgraduate teaching, student welfare and new academic policy.
2 Institutional arrangements

2.1 Academic standards

The University has several mechanisms for assuring itself that the academic standards of the taught postgraduate degrees awarded in its name are at an appropriately high level.

The following paragraphs describe the overarching factors 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 taught postgraduate programmes (see Section 4).

The University recruits academic staff who can fulfil its requirements for conducting research and contributing to high quality education. Specifications for appointments and promotion can be found on the University website:

http://www.bris.ac.uk/personnel/recruitment
http://www.bristol.ac.uk/personnel/grading/academic/movement/promotion/

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.

**External examining**

Feedback from external examiners is considered within the Annual Programme Review process by schools and is monitored at University level by the Education Support Unit and by the Faculty Quality Assurance Team (FQAT) plenary group.

**Progress monitoring**

Faculty Graduate Studies Committees receive statistical reports on student progress, including completion rates and withdrawals for the relevant Faculty. All requests for a suspension or extension of study and programme transfers must be approved by the Graduate Education Director, who also views all student withdrawal forms. He/she therefore has oversight of student progress within the Faculty. Faculty office staff issue all formal letters to students confirming the approval of progress changes and make relevant changes to the student record. There is also monitoring of progress of student cohorts by programme directors at programme/school level, and as part of Annual Programme Review.

2.2 Maintaining and improving the quality of taught postgraduate programmes

**Annual Programme Review (APR)**

This programme quality assurance process is described on the University website at:

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/progreview/

The Annual Programme Review process is monitored by each Faculty’s Quality Assurance Team (FQAT). Each school considers feedback on taught postgraduate degree programmes gathered from students and programme directors, and produces a report, which is copied to its FQAT. In addition, members of the FQAT team meet a proportion of taught postgraduate students independently on an annual basis, to talk about their student experience, both academic and pastoral.

**Board of examiners’ results**

As chairs of their respective Faculty Examination Board (Postgraduate), the Graduate Education Directors scrutinise all taught postgraduate degree results and can consider minutes of meetings or any issues raised by schools. Boards of
Examiners normally consist of a range of representatives from appropriate disciplines.

*University School Review (previously University Departmental Review)*
This is a holistic process involving internal and external reviewer/s where key aspects of a school's performance are assessed. There are two types of review, major and minor, depending on the School's performance and the University's view of what is required. Reviews take place on a rolling basis but educational programmes within a School are reviewed at least every 5 years, even if other aspects are deemed not to require a major review. Panel members will meet taught postgraduate students as part of the review. Guidelines are under review. The 2009-2010 guidelines can be found at: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/deptreviews/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/deptreviews/)

*Regular surveys of taught student views*
Schools conduct surveys of views of taught postgraduates on their overall experience of the programme and its components, which inform the development of the University's provision for taught postgraduate students. The University also participates in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), a national survey organised by the Higher Education Academy (see Section 10.4).

*Staff/student liaison committees*
Schools should host staff/student liaison committee meetings each term (or biannually) to seek the views of taught postgraduate students on their overall experience of the programme and the facilities provided. Part-time students who are away from the precinct for extended periods of time should be invited to provide feedback on their study experience at appropriate times, e.g. in online discussions on Blackboard or during a teaching block.

*Links with the University of Bristol Students’ Union*
Representatives of the University of Bristol Students' Union have opportunities to meet Graduate Education Directors informally, and to attend meetings of the UGSC, by invitation, to provide postgraduate student feedback on specific issues.

*Student complaints monitoring*
The University Graduate Studies Committee receives the Annual Report of the Student Complaints Officer which includes details on the number of formal student complaints and appeals made by postgraduate students over the previous academic session. In addition, relevant University Council recommendations arising from complaints and appeals are referred to UGSC for consideration. This ensures that appropriate changes are made in response to any generic issue which is identified during the appeal process. Graduate Education Directors may also deal with student complaint cases on an individual basis with reference to the University's regulations. Graduate Education Directors normally deal with student appeals against an examination decision at faculty level and advise students of the relevant procedures, as necessary.

### 2.3 Regulations for taught postgraduate programmes
All of the University’s taught postgraduate programmes are governed by these Regulations and Code of Practice and are listed in the University Charter, Acts, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations 2010-11; [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/rules-regulations/regulations2010.pdf](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/rules-regulations/regulations2010.pdf). The University’s general regulations and minimum requirements are outlined in boxes throughout this document.

All taught postgraduate students and programme directors should be familiar with the regulations that relate to their programme and with these Regulations and Code of Practice.
2.4 Monitoring of taught postgraduate degree programmes against indicators and targets

The University uses the following indicators for monitoring taught postgraduate degrees.

Award and qualification rates for taught postgraduate degrees
Internal data on award and qualification rates, collected by the Student Systems and Information Office (SSIO), are considered annually by the University Graduate Studies Committee, Faculties and the Education Committee.

Faculties should monitor the progress of taught postgraduate students at examination boards and as part of Annual Programme Review.

Other annual monitoring statistics
Annual monitoring statistics are collected by the Student Systems and Information Office. They form part of the information provided to schools for Annual Programme Review (APR). These statistics are also collated by faculty and submitted to the UGSC. The indicators used include the following:

- awards data and length of time taken to obtain an award (including pass, fail and exiting with a different award than that for which originally registered)
- withdrawal rates (by year)

In the future, the University plans to monitor:

- awards data on merit and distinction awards
- number of, and reasons for, suspensions of study
- number of, and reasons for, extensions of study
- number of re-assessments taken each year (by unit)
3 The subject area and the learning environment

The University consistently maintains a research environment of outstanding quality, as evidenced by its performance in successive Research Assessment Exercises, and most academic staff are engaged in both high level research and teaching.

The University is committed to high quality teaching and its taught postgraduate teaching is typically research-led and at an advanced level or designed so that students acquire professional and/or specialist technical, clinical or vocational skills for continuing professional practice and development. Some of the University’s taught postgraduate programmes are professionally-accredited; many have industrial or professional society links or are aimed at the reflective practitioner. The level at which taught postgraduates learn is different from undergraduates and there is increased capacity for self-direction and ‘independent learning’ within the learning experience. Teaching is typically delivered in a variety of ways which may include lectures, seminars, tutorials, case study, technical or practical examples, laboratory work or may involve professional or clinical placements. Enhancement of the University’s teaching infrastructure is continuous. For example, the University has invested significantly in its Virtual Learning Environment, Blackboard, in the last 12 months.

Bristol offers a rich and diverse range of taught postgraduate programmes leading to Master’s degrees (e.g. MA, MEd, MSc, MRes, LLM), postgraduate diplomas or postgraduate certificates. Programmes may be studied on a full-time, part-time or part-time variable (flexible and modular) basis, as set out in individual programme specifications. Individual programmes may be designed for progression into research degrees, for advanced specialist study, as conversion courses or to provide professional or vocational training. Programmes also offer postgraduates the opportunity for personal growth.

Taught postgraduate programmes clearly improve students’ employment prospects. The University’s Careers Service is the main source of careers advice and guidance for taught postgraduate students, while additional information may be provided in schools (by personal tutors or equivalent).

Students have access to a range of study resources and facilities during their studies as outlined in school handbooks. They also have access to social networking opportunities. Taught postgraduates are a significant part of the University’s student community.

The following are the University’s expectations of the ways in which schools ensure an appropriate disciplinary and learning environment for students during their study:

Schools will ensure that the student can interact with a range of appropriate teaching staff on his/her programme of study. Teaching staff will have expertise in the subject area.

Schools will seek to ensure that the learning environment is suitable for a diverse student body, including those studying on a full-time, part-time or part-time variable basis (as applicable), as well as disabled students, international students and students working in professional employment who do not often visit the University campus.

Students working remotely from their school, including those ‘writing up’ the dissertation or equivalent, should have access to appropriate facilities to support their work, including those available electronically such as journals, books and specialist statistical or IT packages.
Schools will ensure students are aware of the University and other specialist facilities made available to them during their studies, e.g. library or office/laboratory/workshop space, and of any requirements for use. Health and Safety training will be provided, where appropriate.

Where a student is required to participate in a professional placement or industrial project, the School will ensure that the student has access to appropriate facilities, information and support while working outside the University. Organisers of student placements will be familiar with the University’s ‘Guidelines on Student Placements in Taught Programmes’ (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/placements/).

Students should have access to general and disciplinary-specific careers advice and support during their studies.
4 Selection, admission and induction of students

4.1 Admission requirements

The University's general admissions requirements for entry to taught postgraduate degree programmes are outlined in the Admissions Principles and Procedures for Postgraduate Taught Programmes (Annex 7) and the University Postgraduate Prospectus, available on the University's website. Taught postgraduate programmes and their requirements are also described in detail in school literature and web pages.

4.2 Selection and admissions procedures

Selection of taught postgraduates is in line with the University's Admissions Principles and Procedures for Postgraduate Taught Programmes (Annex 7).

4.3 Period of study

The period of study begins when the student is first registered for the degree programme.

Students are expected to complete their programme within the specified normal study period and not exceed the maximum study period.

The maximum study period normally only applies to students who are undergoing re-assessment.

The normal and maximum periods of study for the University's taught postgraduate degrees are summarised below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Award</th>
<th>Student mode of attendance</th>
<th>Normal study period</th>
<th>Maximum study period</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate 60 credit points</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Not less than 15 weeks' study 6 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time variable</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not more than two years' study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma 120 credit points</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Not less than 31 weeks' study 15 months</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>24 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time variable</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not more than three years' study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree 180 credit points</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Not less than 50 weeks' study 24 months</td>
<td>18 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>36 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time variable</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not more than five years' study *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA in Law 240 credit points</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>Not more than three years' study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSc in Social</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>Not more than three years' study</td>
</tr>
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### Table: Taught Postgraduate Programmes 2010/11

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<th>Programme</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>Three Years' Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work</strong></td>
<td>300 credit points</td>
<td></td>
<td>three years' study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M ClinDent</strong></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>36 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>48 months</td>
<td>60 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PGCE</strong></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Not more than three years' study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Postgraduate Certificate in Education)</td>
<td>60 credit points</td>
<td></td>
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*Not more than eight years study for part-time variable students on the MSc in Teaching and Learning for Health Professionals, the Master in Laws (LLM) by Advanced Study and the CPDA Engineering programme.*

### 4.4 Registration and Induction

Faculty offices and schools send detailed information on registration and induction to prospective students once they have accepted their offer of a place (typically in July/August for full-time students), so that students are made aware of what to expect when they start their degree programme.

#### 4.4.1 Registration

Students must register at the beginning of each academic year for which credit is being sought and pay relevant tuition fees.

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 the award of a qualification at this or another institution.

Students on some taught postgraduate programmes may be permitted to register initially for a postgraduate diploma or postgraduate certificate, subject to faculty approval.

Graduates of the University in receipt of a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma award may be permitted by the faculty to re-register for the taught or research component (and to pay the relevant fee) for a Master’s degree, normally within the programme’s maximum study period or, where applicable, as part of Accredited Prior Learning procedures (see **Annex 4**). In such cases, on successful completion of the Master’s award, the Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma will be subsumed into the higher award and the original award certificate must be returned to the faculty office by the student.

Following online registration, students can obtain a certificate of registration and details of their University computer username and password.

Annual registration is compulsory for students on part-time and part-time variable (modular) programmes. Continuing students in debt to the University will not be permitted to re-register or progress until the debt is settled.

Students registering for units on modular programmes (known as part-time variable students) are required to record their choice of units for Teaching Block 1 by 15 October and for Teaching Block 2 by 15 January. Where no unit(s) will be studied,
students are required to inform their school that their status will be dormant for the session (see section 6.5). Procedures for unit changes and transfers are outlined in school handbooks.

Visa-holding students must have their visas checked by the International Office prior to collecting their student cards.

4.4.2 Induction

Induction is important as it prepares postgraduates for study by giving them key information on the programme, procedures, staff and sources of help. Full-time and part-time students must attend faculty induction where they will collect their student card and Faculty Handbook. They must also attend school induction where they will receive key study information. The timing and content of induction events is designed to support the needs of different groups of taught postgraduate students, including part-time students and international students arriving in the UK for the first time and to prepare them for study. In some faculties where schools are located away from the main precinct, faculty induction will take place at school level.

Induction takes place in the first week of the academic session for full-time and part-time students. Induction of part-time variable students normally takes place at the start of the first teaching session and may be supplemented by on-line information and resources, where appropriate (e.g. Blackboard). Distance-learning students may attend ‘virtual’ induction via Blackboard.

As part of induction, schools will provide taught postgraduate students with programme information, normally in the form of a paper or electronic student or programme handbook and often separate unit and dissertation handbooks. The content of such handbooks will be in line with the University’s Guidelines for Student Handbooks for Taught Programmes (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/policy/handbooks/) and will map out the programme content and requirements for the qualification. They will normally cover in detail: the programme structure and requirements including academic standards, teaching and learning approach, learning resources and infrastructure, assessment criteria, methods, deadlines and requirements, good academic practice (including research and academic writing skills and referencing), definitions of plagiarism and cheating, plagiarism detection methods, what to expect from the dissertation supervision experience, academic and pastoral support, progress and monitoring, student representation and feedback, appeals and complaints and sources of help and support during study.

As part of induction, some programmes may require students to participate in diagnostic tests to evaluate their level of competency in required core skills. In some programmes, students are asked to write a practice academic essay on which they will receive detailed feedback from staff. Such tests are designed to help students better understand the requirements of the programme at an early stage and enable staff to offer support to students where this is needed.

The University’s minimum requirements for induction of new taught postgraduate students are:

Students will have an opportunity to meet key teaching and support staff in an appropriate setting as well as other students on the programme.

Students will receive school induction/orientation information in electronic or paper format which will normally include:
- A detailed induction programme (an example of content is given in Annex 6).
- A timetable and calendar of key academic events.
- Student or programme handbook and unit and dissertation handbooks which outline the programme requirements and academic standards.
- Details of key staff and their contact details and office hours/weekly availability.
- Sources of academic and pastoral help and support.
- Sources of general training, e.g. Guide to Postgraduate Skills Training.

Students will also receive a copy of the following publications or be directed to the online versions:
- A Faculty Handbook
- A copy of these Regulations and Code of Practice
- A University Student Handbook

### 4.5 Programme of study

The University Postgraduate Prospectus and websites provide information for applicants on programmes of study. During registration and induction, students receive information on their programme of study in faculty and programme handbooks as well as online. Programme handbooks will make clear any requirements for gaining credit points, e.g. satisfactory attendance, satisfactory completion of assessment.

*The University’s minimum requirements for taught programmes are as follows:*

All programmes remain the responsibility of the relevant faculty, subject to Senate approval.

Each programme will have a programme specification, specifying mandatory and optional units and credit points, programme and assessment requirements, learning outcomes and where applicable the credit expiry period for any units. Additional professional and clinical skills and competency requirements will be specified in full. The University’s standard unit sizes for taught postgraduate programmes are 10, 15, 20 and 30 credit points, with a maximum of 60 credit points for a single taught unit.

Professional programmes will provide students with information on any professional requirements including compulsory practical, clinical or professional placements. These requirements will be specified in programme specifications and handbooks.

### 4.6 Student entitlements and responsibilities

Taught postgraduate students will have demonstrated, on entry to the University, their prior learning and aptitude for advanced study at Master’s level. Students should approach their taught postgraduate study in a way that promotes independent and self-directed learning. Some subject-specific definitions of independent learning are provided in Annex 3.

*Taught postgraduate students should expect the following entitlements:*

**Student Entitlements**

Information on registration, induction and tuition fees.

Adequate opportunities to meet their Personal Tutor and/or Programme Director (as applicable), unit directors and dissertation supervisor(s) for informal and formal
Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes 2010/11

discussions about academic progress or pastoral matters. Staff office
hours/availability will be made available to students.

Information on programme and unit requirements and content, and a timetable.

Information on how academic progress towards the award is monitored.

Information on the return of required written work, with formative feedback, within an
agreed time scale (typically 3-4 weeks for full-time students, unless exceptional
circumstances arise, in which case students will be informed of the deadline).

Access to a learning infrastructure that supports the progress of the student's studies
and his/her ability to complete the degree successfully within the required time
period.

Access to an appropriate learning environment (in the University or collaborating
institutions) within which there is relevant and sufficient expertise and appropriate
facilities available to support the programme of study.

Access to a wider research environment, e.g. school research seminars.

Information about the support and guidance available at school, faculty and
University level (e.g. student handbooks, student web pages).

Where relevant, details of appropriate language courses, bearing in mind the
challenge of following a language course while the student is committed to a full-time
programme of study.

Information on student representation procedures at school and, where appropriate,
faculty/University level.

Information on grievances and appeals procedures.

Information on student feedback opportunities.

Taught postgraduate students are expected to accept the following responsibilities:

Students’ Responsibilities

To register with the University at the start of the academic session and pay the
required approved fees.

To take responsibility for the progress of their study and assessed work.

To make the most of learning opportunities that will enhance their capacity for
independent and 'self-directed' learning.

To acknowledge fully the work of others in coursework and assessed work, and be
familiar with the referencing conventions of the discipline or programme.

To produce work which is free from plagiarism.

To maintain effective working relationships with University staff, e.g. programme
director, personal tutor, unit directors, dissertation supervisor and other students, and
to treat all staff and other students with due respect and consideration.

To notify the University of any disability, mitigating circumstances or support needs
that may affect their study or performance in assessments, in line with the
Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes 2010/11

To notify the University of changes in their personal data as soon as they occur, e.g. changes in term time/home addresses or telephone numbers (students are required to update their personal information online at https://www.bris.ac.uk/studentinfo/).

To notify programme directors of any potential change in circumstance in good time, e.g. requests for a change in mode of attendance, suspension of study (and resumption of study), extension of study, programme transfer and withdrawal. (Standard forms are in Annex 4).

To be familiar with, and comply with University Regulations and Guidelines including:

- These Regulations and Code of Practice and relevant programme regulations (http://www.bris.ac.uk/university/governance/rules-regulations/ refers).
- The University’s Rules and Regulations for Students (including the University’s Intellectual Property Policy for Students: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/intelprop.html)
- The University’s Examination Regulations (including the sections on plagiarism and cheating).
- Relevant legal and ethical requirements, and University rules, including those covering health and safety, data protection, research ethics and confidentiality.
- Norms of good research practice applicable to the disciplinary area.

To meet the University’s requirements for good academic conduct, including:

- Timely submission of assessed work by the set deadlines.
- Attendance at meetings with unit directors and dissertation supervisor(s) as required.
- Regular attendance at lectures, seminars and practical sessions and active participation in the programme of study.
- Responsibility for one’s own personal and professional development.
- Ensuring registration on the correct units with sufficient credit points for the programme.

To ensure that he/she has the necessary financial support to enable completion of the programme.

Students on professionally-recognised vocational programmes are expected to maintain standards of conduct commensurate with professional practice standards.

International students with student visa or immigration questions must only discuss these with staff in the International Advice and Support Unit in the International Office (based in the Students' Union). Staff are specially trained to advise international students with any queries. They are also responsible for providing general support and guidance to international students.
5 Academic and Pastoral Support

The University offers a wide range of academic and pastoral support to its taught postgraduate students. In many schools support is team-based although specific staff have designated roles and responsibilities and are able to refer students to the best source of relevant information. Students should make the best use of the support offered to them.

As part of induction, students will be provided with information on the support services provided by school administrative staff including staff contact details and office opening hours.

5.1 Administrative staff

In many schools, administrative staff are the first point of contact for students who have general queries about their programme, e.g. timetable, unit changes or assessment submission requirements.

5.2 Personal Tutor

Most taught postgraduates are assigned a Personal Tutor (or equivalent) within their school to whom they can turn for help and advice on both academic and personal matters. Schools will make available to students the pastoral support arrangements that apply in relevant student handbooks.

The Head of School, or appropriate delegate, oversees the personal tutor system in each school. The allocation of personal tutors to tutees will take account of staff workloads and the student cohort. In some schools, the role of Personal Tutor may be carried out by the Programme Director, unit directors on the programme or other designated staff. Pastoral support arrangements for part-time variable students will be specified in school handbooks.

The primary role of the Personal Tutor is to provide advice and to refer the student to specialist agencies where appropriate. The Personal Tutor is expected to meet his/her tutees during induction week (or within two weeks of initial student registration) and subsequently at least once per term and as required.

The University sets out its minimum provision for personal tutors in the Regulations for Personal Tutors: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/rules-regulations/personal-tutors.pdf

Personal Tutors and students should be familiar with the University’s Student Help resource (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/studenthelp/) which provides answers to frequently asked questions and links to University student support and advice services.

5.3 Programme Director

The Programme Director* is responsible for the day-to-day running of the programme, for the maintenance of academic standards, the quality of education and educational support and the review and development of the programme.

* In the Faculty of Arts, the Graduate Officer is the programme director for all Master’s programmes within a School. Details of the job description are obtainable from the school office. In addition, there are MA co-ordinators in each School. In the School of Law, the Director of Graduate Studies undertakes most aspects of this role except admissions.
The Programme Director is normally responsible for the following areas:

- **recruitment and admission of students to the programme** (in some schools this may be the responsibility of an admissions tutor, selector or admissions team)
- **overall organisation of the syllabus.** Duties will include overseeing the organisation of the programme and monitoring the progress of students. He/she will also have oversight of the programme specification and handbook(s).
- **delivery of the programme and oversight of staffing and timetable issues.**
- **liaison with students and staff regarding feedback on the programme and taking appropriate action as necessary.** Handling student and staff problems and grievances in connection with delivery of the programme.
- **oversight of assessment processes** (in liaison with the School Examinations Officer) which may include chairing of the Examination Board and nominating external examiners.
- **oversight of the quality assurance of the programme,** including the preparation of Annual Programme Review documentation.

The Programme Director will also normally monitor student progress and deal with requests for programme transfers, suspensions and extensions and changes in modes of attendance before Graduate Education Director approval. Where delegated by the Head of School, he/she will also oversee the allocation of dissertation supervisors and dissertation projects.

The Programme Director should be familiar with these Regulations and Code of Practice, the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes, and the University’s ‘Guidelines for Programme Directors’

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/policy/guideprogdir.html

The Programme Director may attend a diversity training course to ensure the programme for which he/she is responsible meets the diverse needs of different student groups.

The Programme Director will oversee the quality assurance of the programme for which he/she is responsible, including Annual Programme Review arrangements and feedback on the programme.

**5.4 Director of Graduate Studies / Director of Postgraduate Studies**

Most schools with a large cohort of postgraduate students have a Director of Graduate or Postgraduate Studies who has oversight of taught postgraduate or all postgraduate programmes. He/she will meet all programme directors in the school at least twice a year to discuss general issues arising from the delivery of taught postgraduate programmes and student support issues. He/she reports to the Head of School and may raise general issues of wider relevance to the Faculty or University, with the Graduate Education Director. He/she may also chair the programme examination board.

The Director may also provide support to students in cases where there is a potential conflict of interest in staff roles, e.g. the personal tutor is also the Programme Director.

In the Faculty of Arts, this role equates to the Deputy Head of Teaching and Learning in each School. Job description details are accessible from the school office.
5.5 Facilities and resources

Schools will normally state in school handbooks the minimum provision of facilities and resources for taught postgraduate students. This may include IT resources, study facilities and access (e.g. desk space, telephone, post and photocopying facilities) as well as access to subject or specialist training courses and seminars.

The nature of the resources available to postgraduates will differ according to the programme and the available infrastructure. Taught postgraduates will have an opportunity to comment on the facilities during their studies.

5.6 Skills support

The University recognises the importance of skills development and its ‘Guide to Postgraduate Skills Training’ is available online at: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/groups/graddeans/skillsdevelopmentopps.html
6 Progress Procedures

6.1 Progress and progress monitoring

The University expects taught postgraduate students to make good progress in their studies and to complete the assessment and professional competency requirements within the normal period of study for their award. Student progress is monitored to ensure that programme completion rates remain high and to comply with statutory Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) reporting requirements.

**All students are monitored in terms of their attendance and performance on their programme.**

Schools play a key role in monitoring the progress of taught postgraduate students and offering support to students who are experiencing problems. Information is provided in school handbooks and on relevant web pages. Examples of current school practice include monitoring student attendance and absences, reviewing student presentations on a topic studied in the first teaching block to assess understanding, carrying out laboratory or technical tests on specific topics and providing formative feedback on the first assignment submitted in the first teaching block. Early tests of learning can be helpful for mature students who are returning to learning.

Faculty Graduate Studies Committees (or equivalent) monitor student progress, in particular final awards and withdrawals. Graduate Education Directors authorise the following student progress decisions: suspension of study, extension of study, programme transfer or withdrawals (including deemed withdrawn cases). In addition, school/programme examination boards and/or progress committees, normally held twice a year (after completion of the taught component and then the dissertation/research project component) will monitor the progress of taught postgraduates.

In addition, 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 lectures, seminars and submit coursework on time. Any changes to a visa-holding student’s full-time status, e.g. suspension, withdrawal or move to part-time study, must be reported to the Faculty Office immediately.

**University expectations regarding the monitoring of student progress:**

The University expects informal monitoring of student progress within two to three months of initial registration. Schools will make it clear in their handbooks which methods are used. Practice may vary according to the discipline, student cohort and mode of study. Monitoring of progress will normally include monitoring student attendance on units and performance in seminars and may also include informal evaluations of a student's progress in a unit/programme, depending on the discipline.

Part-time variable students may receive timely feedback on their progress in each unit from the unit director, normally in advance of commencing study on another unit. Guidance is provided in school handbooks.

Informal reviews of student progress will help:
- to ensure that the student is in a position to overcome practical or academic hurdles to progress;
- to enable the student and unit director or dissertation supervisor to discuss any concerns about progress.
Where applicable, the student should see and comment on any written report on his/her progress.

6.2 Student unsatisfactory progress procedure

If a student’s attendance or participation in the programme is identified as being unsatisfactory, or the standard of academic work or assessment/clinical performance is below that generally expected, the Programme Director should make the student aware of this as soon as possible.

Programme Directors receive reports from personal tutors, unit directors or dissertation supervisors on students whose progress or attendance is below that normally required. Where there are concerns about a student’s progress on the programme, Programme Directors (or in some schools, Personal Tutors) will meet with such students to discuss their progress with reference to i) the academic and other relevant requirements of the programme and ii) the support needs of the student. Students should also be given the opportunity to raise pertinent issues such as extenuating circumstances. The Personal Tutor may be invited to attend this meeting at the request of the student. A written note of the meeting should be made and agreed by the programme director and the student.

Where there are serious concerns about a student’s unsatisfactory progress on the programme, it is advisable to draw up an action plan to be agreed by all parties and signed by the student.

If a student continues to fail to make satisfactory progress on the programme, s/he may exceptionally be required to withdraw from the programme or if s/he has accumulated sufficient credit points s/he may be required to leave with an award. The Programme Director will advise the student on the options that may apply.

Students who are required to withdraw will have their case reviewed by the school prior to a final decision being made by the faculty. Students will be notified of the faculty’s decision by the faculty office.

Students who wish to appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners must follow the procedures outlined in section 11 of the Examination Regulations (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html).

6.3 Fitness to Practise Procedures

Where a taught programme leads to a professional qualification which requires a requisite level of fitness to practise, the school should have a Fitness to Practise Procedure (FTPP) which sets out the requisite standards that define ‘fitness to practise’ and the process that will be invoked should a student fall below these standards. The procedure must be fair and provide for the student to receive reasonable remedial support in order to meet the required standards. Where such a programme does not have a formal FTPP, the school must follow a fair process, making clear in advance the ‘fitness’ standards required of students. Where a student is unable to meet the standards, notwithstanding all reasonable support, this may result in a requirement to withdraw from the programme.

Some professionally-accredited programmes may have a termination procedure which requires a student to withdraw for non-academic and ‘professional competence’ reasons. Such procedures will be fair and equitable (see paragraph above), will meet the requirements of the relevant professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and will be made available to students. Schools may wish to have an alternative award for students who fail a professionally-accredited programme, where appropriate.
6.4 Suspension of study and extension of study

The University normally expects students to complete their programme of study in a single continuous period and within the normal study period for the award. Its academic procedures are designed to support student progress.

6.4.1 Suspension of study

The University defines a suspension of study as an approved interruption to academic study for a defined period.

A period of suspension will extend the normal study period by the relevant period. Suspensions should be as short as is necessary to deal with the circumstances, i.e. a request for a suspension based on certified illness for one month would result in a suspension of one month being granted. Suspensions are not normally backdated for more than one month. All suspension requests must be made on the appropriate form (Annex 4) and be in line with the guidance and procedure notes.

A suspension of study may only be granted by the faculty where there are good grounds, for example: a) serious and persistent health/mental health problems, bereavement, maternity/paternity leave and/or sole carer responsibilities, significant financial problems (including being a student debtor); b) job promotion and move to a new location (part-time students), mandatory military service.

Suspension should only be granted where a resumption of study after suspension is academically and practically viable, i.e. the programme’s units can be studied/will be available in one to two years time.

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

During a period of suspension, a student cannot undertake academic study or assessment, receive supervision or tuition. Access to computing and ‘reading only’ library facilities may only be permitted during a suspension of study in exceptional circumstances.

Schools should inform students if significant syllabus changes are likely to occur during their period of suspension that will make it challenging for them to resume their studies. The programme director or nominated staff (e.g. administrative staff in the programme office) will be responsible for informing students of any programme changes and advising them on unit availability and any timetable constraints, before they resume studies.

When resuming study after absence due to medical or mental health problems, a student will need to provide the school with documentary evidence of his/her fitness to study.

Students must inform the school in writing if they are unable to resume study, and of their reasons for this. Failure to resume studies after a suspension, without written notice, will result in a student being deemed withdrawn. Schools will keep a record of such students and report them to the faculty in line with the ‘deemed withdrawn’ procedures (see Section 6.5).

6.4.2 Extension of study

The University defines an extension of study for taught postgraduates as an extension to the programme’s normal study period to enable a student to complete
Decisions on extensions of study are made by boards of examiners and subsequently approved by the faculty, typically by either the Graduate Education Director or faculty examination boards.

Where an extension has been granted and the period of study is extended into the next academic year, the student may be required to re-register and pay fees.

Re-assessment will normally take place within the normal study period. In exceptional cases, re-assessment may constitute good grounds for an extension of study.

In some circumstances, it may be more sensible for a student to suspend rather than extend study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University expectations regarding suspension and extension of study requests:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suspension or extension requests will only be granted where they are in line with the University’s guidelines, are supported by documentary evidence and are submitted on the appropriate form (Annex 4). Medical evidence will be treated in confidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Education Directors may approve a suspension or extension of study for a period up to a maximum of 12 months. For any period longer than 12 months, a strong written case with evidence is required. The maximum permitted period of suspension is normally 24 months, except in the case of maternity leave or disability cases where reasonable adjustments must be made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A suspension of study has implications in terms of tuition fees liability. Advice on reimbursement of tuition fees should therefore be sought from the faculty office. An extension of study may, in some cases, extend fees liability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any suspension or extension of study by a visa-holding student must be reported to the faculty office as soon as it is known, for report to the UK Border Agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students suspending studies for more than 24 months, who wish to resume studies, will be subject to a re-application process. This process may take into account Accredited Prior Learning (APL) including accumulated credit points and academic performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Bristol is not responsible for students during their period of suspension.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.5 Modes of study and changes to modes of study

Taught postgraduate programmes may be studied on a full-time, part-time or part-time variable basis, as set out in individual programme specifications and prospectus information. Other status modes are described below.

Students must inform the University if they wish to change their mode of study, using the ‘Change of Circumstance Form’ and procedures (Annex 4). Approval of requests is subject to school and faculty approval.

**Student status definitions**

The University uses the following definitions of student status:
### Student status definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student status definitions</th>
<th>Definition and impact on fees / registration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>100% of time is spent on study for an award and full-time tuition fees are payable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>50% of time is spent on study for an award and part-time tuition fees are payable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time variable</td>
<td>The student is registered and studies one or more units for an award. Unit fees are payable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing up</td>
<td>When a student is writing the dissertation/research project or equivalent having successfully completed all the taught units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dormant</td>
<td>When a part-time variable student is not taking units/modules in the current academic session. Students must inform their school of their status at the start of the academic session using the relevant form (Annex 4). Dormant students are not entitled access to University facilities or services and they do not pay tuition fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deemed withdrawn</td>
<td>When a student either does not register when required or attend studies or respond to efforts by the school to contact him/her. Any outstanding fees must be paid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional student</td>
<td>A student who wishes to study a unit or module but does not wish to use the credit points towards a taught postgraduate award. Unit fees will be payable and the student will register with the faculty office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All registered taught postgraduate students will pay tuition fees for their programme of study. Failure to pay fees will result in the outstanding debt being pursued. Debtors are not permitted to graduate. See University fees guidance: [http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/studentfees.html](http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/studentfees.html)

### Programme transfer procedure

Where permitted, programme transfers may be granted by the school subject to faculty approval. Decisions on programme transfers will take account of a student’s prior learning, experience and the availability of units. Following both Programme Director and Head of School approval, a ‘Change of Circumstance Form’ (Annex 4) should be sent to the faculty office, for approval by the Graduate Education Director, and for central updating of the student record. Programme transfers will normally only be permitted up to four weeks from initial registration.

A change in choice of units must be approved by the programme director or designate. Procedures are outlined in programme handbooks.

### Change in mode of attendance

Where permitted, students wishing to change their mode of attendance need to complete the ‘Change of Circumstance Form’ in Annex 4. The approval of the school and the faculty is required. The programme specification and programme information will normally define permitted modes of attendance. A change in the mode of
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Attendance will impact on the tuition fees due and timetable arrangements and will therefore require prior discussion with the school.

Any change from full-time study to another status for a visa-holding student must be reported to the faculty office, as soon as it is known, for report to the UK Border Agency. Visa-holding students must study full-time while in the UK.

Withdrawal procedure
Students may withdraw from their programme of study at any time and for any reason. This course of action should be discussed initially with the Programme Director. Students who withdraw are asked to complete a withdrawal form (Annex 4) to help the University understand the reasons for withdrawals and to enable the student record to be updated. On withdrawing from a programme, registration is terminated and the individual ceases to be a student of the University. Any outstanding fees must be paid. A refund of tuition fees may be arranged, where applicable, by the faculty office.

Any visa-holding student who withdraws must be reported to the faculty office, as soon as it is known, for report to the UK Border Agency.

Deemed withdrawn procedure
Students should notify their personal tutor/programme director if they are experiencing problems that are impacting on the progress of their studies. Where a student ceases to attend or submit work, without giving notice and without good cause, or does not resume study after suspension, the school will contact the student. If this proves unsuccessful, after two attempts, the school will assume that the student has decided to withdraw and will complete a withdrawal form on the student’s behalf. Notice of the withdrawal will be sent to the student’s last known address by the faculty office. A person deemed to have withdrawn ceases to be a student of the University.

Any visa-holding student who is deemed withdrawn must be reported to the faculty office, as soon as it is known, for report to the UK Border Agency.

6.6 Credit points framework and cumulative progression

Taught postgraduate awards are normally based on the progressive accumulation of units and credit points. In specific professional/clinical programmes, the concept of knowledge currency is key so that credit points can only count towards credit accumulation within a stated period. Details are provided in programme specifications and programme handbooks.

The University Credit Framework defines the credit requirements for all University awards ([http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/ug/mod/creditframework.pdf](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/ug/mod/creditframework.pdf)).

Master’s programmes accredited by professional and statutory bodies are permitted to have a higher volume of credit points for each award, subject to faculty approval. This provision currently applies to the following programmes:
- MSc in Counselling (200 credit points in total)
- MA in Law (240 credit points in total)
- MSc in Social Work (300 credit points in total)

The criteria for the award of credit points in any unit must be made available to students in advance of them commencing study. If a student meets the criteria for the award of credit points for a unit, all credit points must be awarded. There can be no partial award of credit points. It is the responsibility of the Board of Examiners to
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determine whether or not a student has satisfied the criteria for the award of credit points.

Except as specified below, credit points can only be used once and may not be used towards two or more awards of the University. The exceptions are:

i. Where an award at one level may, with the consent of the Faculty, be subsumed into a higher award.

ii. Where, with the consent of Senate, a University award or award of another institution has independent standing as a professional qualification and is accredited by a professional body.

Taught Master’s degrees, unless exempted by Senate, must allow the opportunity for students to choose, or be required, to leave at Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate stage. Awards will be subject to students having obtained sufficient credit points and satisfying the requirements of the programme.

Levels of credit are summarised in section 7.12 of this Code of Practice.

6.7 Credit points and student workloads

The credit points assigned to each unit are based on the approximate number of hours a typical student is expected to spend studying to achieve the learning outcomes for that unit. Amongst Higher Education Institutions in England there is broad agreement that one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning. This concept includes formal learning contact with academic staff as well as self-directed learning such as preparation for teaching sessions and/or formative assessment as well as reading and private study.

There is an expectation that the weekly workload for full-time students on taught programmes in all faculties should amount to approximately 40 hours per week. The proportion of time devoted to formal teaching and to private study will vary according to the programme/discipline.

As independent learners, students need to familiarise themselves with the level of work that is expected in each unit and to manage their work/life balance effectively. Attending University courses on time management and other personal effectiveness and skills courses may be of benefit.
7 Assessment

7.1 Assessment

Assessment and feedback are crucial in the learning cycle. Assessment procedures and processes need to be operated fairly and consistently to ensure students have optimum opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge.

The University places great importance on the assessment of, and feedback on, student work. The University Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/assessment/) covers the following areas in detail:

- Forms and conduct of assessment
- The process of marking
- Roles and responsibilities in assessment
- Outcomes of assessment
- Examples of assessment types (Annexes)

The University has the following expectations about assessment of taught postgraduates:

Assessment of taught postgraduate students is conducted in accordance with the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes and, where applicable, faculty guidelines. The University's Examination Regulations form part of these regulations.

Assessment procedures, marking criteria and intended learning outcomes for individual programmes are specified in school programme and unit handbooks.

Assessment will normally be undertaken in the same academic session in which the relevant taught and dissertation components have taken place.

Formative assessment should be conducted within the first 2-3 months of a taught postgraduate Master’s programme to provide timely feedback to the student on the overall standard to be achieved in the programme. Examples of good practice include: requiring students to submit a draft assignment, on which qualitative feedback is given based on the marking criteria, or giving oral or written feedback on seminar tests or seminar presentations.

7.2 Forms of assessment

The University's large and varied portfolio of taught postgraduate programmes has enabled a diverse range of assessment modes to develop (see Annex 2 of the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes). Assessment may be diagnostic, formative or summative (for definitions, see Annex 1 of this Code). Details of assessment criteria, marking schemes and requirements are outlined in school handbooks. An evaluation of assessment methods is normally part of Annual Programme Review.

For most taught postgraduate programmes, including part-time and professional programmes, academic coursework will be an important part of assessment at unit level. In some programmes, practical and/or laboratory tests, professional/clinical
placement, creative performance or unseen written examination will form a major part of the assessment.

Schools should ensure that assessment methods meet the needs of their students, in line with the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes.

7.3 Oral examinations

An oral examination may be used in the assessment of a postgraduate Master’s degree, if it applies to the whole student cohort and is clearly linked to the programme’s learning outcomes. Oral examinations are conducted in line with faculty guidelines. Students will receive timely information on the purpose, format, duration and assessment of the oral examination and should have an opportunity to give an oral presentation or practise for an oral examination in advance e.g. in student seminars.

A candidate may be examined orally on the subject of the dissertation/research project, subject to him/her being given at least 10 days’ notice and information to enable preparation.

7.4 The marking process

Each Faculty will establish generic marking criteria, supplemented at individual programme level to reflect discipline specific learning outcomes and the relevant nationally set subject benchmarks. Schools will have clear marking schemes as outlined in the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes. As a minimum, schools will provide information on the moderation procedures that apply for each school/unit.

The principle of anonymous marking applies, as far as possible, to the assessment of postgraduate taught programmes. However, given the specialised nature of dissertations at any level, it may be impossible to achieve anonymity in assessing the dissertation. Use of a candidate’s University of Bristol student number is normally sufficient to ensure anonymity.

7.5 Medical and other extenuating circumstances

The Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes makes it clear that Schools are responsible for providing students with information on procedures for reporting medical or other extenuating circumstances to the relevant special circumstances committee meeting so that these may be taken into account when reviewing a student’s performance in an assessment. Provision of relevant and timely information by students will enable the school board of examiners to make fair and reasonable decisions in the circumstances.

7.6 Student absence and self-certification

Students who are absent, due to illness, from teaching for up to five consecutive days (excluding weekends) must submit a Student Self-Certification Form to the school when they return to study. Forms can be accessed at: http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/assessment/annex/studentillnessforms.pdf

Guidance on Student Absence due to Illness is available in the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes.
7.7 Roles and responsibilities in assessment

7.7.1 Functions of examiners

Examination procedures are outlined in the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes and in the University’s Examination Regulations.

The specific roles and responsibilities of internal and external examiners are set out in the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes.

University requirements in respect of examiners of taught postgraduate programmes:

The following criteria must be used when selecting internal and external examiners for taught postgraduate programmes:

- the examiners have adequate experience of examining taught postgraduate degree programmes or similar types of programmes to that leading to the candidate's intended award
- the examiners are able to make a fair and impartial assessment of the candidate's work;
- there are no conflicts of interest.

(see Guidelines for External Examining of taught programmes at the University of Bristol; [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/assessment/exexs/exexguide.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/assessment/exexs/exexguide.html))

Examiners are provided with sufficient information to enable them to conduct the assessment effectively and fairly. Examiners will be aware of all relevant University, faculty and school policy documents and guidance, and of information about any relevant special needs in assessment that the candidate may have.

7.7.2 Constitution and role of programme (‘school’) examination boards

The Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes includes details on the constitution and requirements for Board of Examiners.

Where a postgraduate Master's degree programme includes the requirement for a dissertation or equivalent, an interim Board of Examiners shall be held at the end of the taught component to consider the progress of students, whether re-assessment opportunities are required for successful completion of the programme and whether progression to the dissertation stage should be permitted.

Programme examination boards will carry out the following functions:
- approve taught postgraduate unit marks
- recommend postgraduate awards to the Faculty Examination Board
- keep a record of the meeting and decisions made
- keep a record of discussion on borderline cases where individual medical or other extenuating circumstances are presented.

Each programme examination board will report to the Faculty Examination Board in a standard format. Reports will normally relate to full-time and part-time cohorts and contain the following: student number, unit names and codes and credit points allocation, unit marks, whether the mark was achieved at a first or second attempt and the award recommendation for each student. In the case of fail marks, there will be a note of where credit points have been awarded for a failed unit, if applicable.
The Board of Examiners shall determine whether a student, on completion of the programme including the final assessment, has obtained the required number of credit points for the award of a Master's degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate.

If a student is prevented by illness or other sufficient cause from attending or completing an assessment, s/he may, with the consent of the faculty, be admitted to an assessment on a subsequent occasion.

### 7.7.3 The Faculty Examination Board

The role of the Faculty Examination Board is described in the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes. Faculties oversee standard forms and reports for use at Faculty Examination Boards.

### 7.8 Assessment Outcomes - Pass Marks

The Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes states:

21.3 The pass mark set by the University for any level 7 (M) unit is 50 out of 100.

21.4 For a Master's award, candidates should achieve, as a minimum, the average of the programme pass mark in the taught component. Faculties retain the discretion in respect of any programme within their faculty to require that a candidate for a Master's award also achieves a pass mark in all (or a specified proportion of all) units taken within that taught component.

21.5 Where taught postgraduate programmes include undergraduate level units the pass mark for the undergraduate unit remains 40 out of 100. Marks for these units should be taken into account in the calculation of the programme mark and cannot be adjusted.

The University has adopted the following mark bands for taught postgraduate programmes:

- 50 and over out of 100: Pass
- 49 and below out of 100: Fail

In the Graduate School of Education and the Department of Exercise, Nutrition and Health Sciences, a letter grade mark scheme has been adopted for specific professional taught postgraduate programmes, as follows:

- A – C: Pass
- D: Fail

### 7.9 Re-assessment

Schools may, with the permission of the Faculty, offer one re-assessment attempt to any student who has failed to obtain the credit points at the first attempt. Schools may limit the opportunities for re-assessment to half of the taught component for Master's programmes, subject to Faculty Graduate Studies Committee approval.
The failure of any student to show satisfactory progress on the programme, including failure in summative assessment, failure to obtain credit points or to attend regularly or meet the requirements of any prescribed part of a programme shall be reported to the Board of Examiners which may agree one of the following as appropriate:

i. that the student re-take and pass the unit or the assessment of the unit, obtaining the necessary credit points;
ii. that the student achieve a satisfactory standard in an additional approved unit of at least equivalent value;
iii. that the student repeat the programme as a whole;
iv. that the student withdraw from the programme, with an award, if appropriate;
v. that the student transfer to a different award programme.

A pass in re-assessed work at Master’s level will be capped at mark of 50, except where there is good cause for the initial failed assessment e.g. medical and other extenuating circumstances (see the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes for guidance).

Re-assessment should take place as soon as is possible after the learning experience. Deferment of re-assessment should only be permitted for good reason, e.g. extenuating circumstances.

The nature of the re-assessment task may vary, as appropriate to the discipline/programme and the assessment modes used. This will be an academic decision, normally made by the programme or unit director.

Partial re-assessment in a unit is permitted, particularly where skills and competence are being evaluated.

The following re-assessment deadlines apply:

i. Re-submission of essays and coursework should normally be within 4-6 weeks for full-time students.
ii. Re-submission of the dissertation/research project should normally be within 3 months for full-time students and pro rata for part-time or part-time variable students.

Re-assessment of the dissertation is covered in section 9.5.

7.10 Award of credit points for marginally failed units

Decisions on whether students are eligible for credit points, for a marginally failed unit(s), are made by school or programme boards of examiners and ratified by the Faculty Examination Board to ensure uniformity of practice and fairness to students. Decisions will only be approved where the student’s overall performance on the programme has been satisfactory, the learning outcomes of the programme have been met, and where the student has demonstrated potential to succeed at the next stage, if appropriate.

When permitted, compensation may be applied at the end of the assessment or re-assessment process. Boards of examiners may apply compensation criteria to enable students to progress to the Master’s award or to leave with a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate, as appropriate. In such cases, a pass is the maximum award classification that can be made.

Faculties may adopt guidance on compensation for their taught programmes and specify whether this applies equally to mandatory and optional units. Details of
Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes 2010/11

Compensation criteria will be made available to students, normally in student handbooks.

Subject to Faculty approval, a Board of Examiners may decide to award up to 30 credit points where a student has obtained a mark for the unit which is below the pass mark. This provision shall only be available where the unit failure is marginal (40-49) and where the student has achieved an overall average of 50 in both the taught component and the dissertation and has met or exceeded the learning outcomes and any other requirements of the programme. Master’s level unit marks in the 0-39 range and level 4 (C), 5 (I) and 6 (H) units are not normally eligible for compensation.

Programmes in which such compensation is not permitted are likely to include professional and/or professionally-accredited programmes which have specific skills and competence requirements and require all units to be passed for continuing professional development or professional/clinical recognition. Such programmes will be clearly identified in faculty and school handbooks.

7.11 Progression to the dissertation

Progression to the dissertation stage is normally based on the satisfactory completion of the taught component. There is no compensation between the taught component and the dissertation. Preparation for the dissertation may begin before the assessment of the taught component has been completed. The dissertation may be suspended at the discretion of the board of examiners if the results from the taught component are unsatisfactory.

Schools may set other requirements for progression to the dissertation, such as the satisfactory completion of a research methods unit, the details of which will be in school handbooks.

7.12 Award criteria for taught postgraduate degrees

The University’s credit framework, an extract of which is produced below, summarises the amount and level of credit required to receive a University award.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Total credits required</th>
<th>Minimum number of credits required at the highest level</th>
<th>Additional credit requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>7/M</td>
<td>At least 180</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Remaining credits to be at level 6 or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate diploma</td>
<td>7/M</td>
<td>At least 120</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Remaining credits to be at level 6 or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate certificate</td>
<td>7/M</td>
<td>At least 60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Remaining credits to be at level 6 or higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A student will only receive a postgraduate Master’s degree if he/she has successfully completed both the taught and dissertation stages of the programme, has achieved
sufficient credit points and has met all programme requirements for the award.

Students shall be eligible for the award of only one University qualification from any particular programme of study, except as specified in section 6.6 of the Code.

Eligibility for the award of taught postgraduate degrees will be based on the satisfactory accumulation of the relevant credit points as outlined in the Credit Framework as well as achievement at the specified level. Professional/clinical programmes may have additional skills and competency criteria that need to be met.

7.13 Distinction and merit awards

The Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes sets out the criteria on which distinctions and merits may be awarded:

**Award with distinction:** not less than 65 out of 100 for the taught component overall and not less than 70 out of 100 for the dissertation, though faculties retain discretion to increase this threshold;

*or*

*For existing Masters programmes that do not have a separate dissertation:*

not less than 65 out of 100 overall with a mark of not less than 70 in two thirds of the total credit points for the award, though faculties retain discretion to increase this threshold.

**Award with merit:** not less than 60 out of 100 for the taught component overall and not less than 60 out of 100 for the dissertation, though faculties retain discretion to increase this threshold;

*or*

*For existing Masters programmes that do not have a separate dissertation:*

not less than 60 out of 100 overall with a mark of not less than 60 out of 100 in two thirds of the total credit points for the award, though faculties retain discretion to increase this threshold.

7.14 Aegrotat awards

Where students are prevented by illness or other substantial cause from taking a deferred assessment, they may request in writing the award of an Aegrotat degree under Ordinance 18 from the programme director, subject to approval by the Graduate Education Director as chair of the Faculty Examination Board. ([http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/rules-regulations/ordinances.pdf](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/rules-regulations/ordinances.pdf)).

Examination Boards may also award posthumous awards where there is evidence of significant progress having been made by the student in acquiring the learning outcomes of the programme and associated credit points.

7.15 Disclosure of marks and results

The Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes describes good practice in relation to the releasing of award results.
Final degree transcripts are produced by the faculty. Details are published on relevant websites.

7.16 Appeal against decisions of Boards of Examiners

Section 11 of the Examination Regulations outlines the procedure to be followed (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html#appeal).
8.1 Academic Integrity

The University is a community of academic staff and students engaged in research and learning and part of an international academic community. **Academic integrity** is a core principle of the University, encapsulated in its values of **honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility**. Translated into practice, academic integrity means behaving in a professional manner, treating academic study and all staff and students with respect and courtesy. Examples of academic integrity and good academic conduct include:

- engaging in respectful debate with others even when there is a difference of opinion;
- fully acknowledging the work of others in assignments and using norms of referencing in a specific subject (thereby avoiding plagiarism);
- ensuring that research data are authentic and honest;
- maintaining professional standards of behaviour (professionally accredited vocational programmes);
- being responsible for one’s own work;
- respecting the original work of other people;
- not seeking to have an unfair advantage over other people.

*Source: University of Southampton, 2008*

School induction, study skills sessions and unit teaching will enable students to understand the concept of academic integrity in practice.

Students on professionally-accredited vocational programmes will have separate codes of professional/clinical conduct and standards that apply.

8.2 Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating, collusion, impersonation, falsifying research data and the use of inadmissible material.

8.2.1 Plagiarism

The University takes plagiarism seriously and its procedures for dealing with cases are outlined in section 4 of the Examination Regulations ([http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html)).

Students should be aware of good academic practice in written work and creative practice and understand how to use the work of other scholars in exploring issues while studying. Students should make good use of courses and sessions on good academic practice and study skills which are run in schools and may be offered online.

**Plagiarism** is stealing from the work of another without indicating by a reference, or by “quotation marks" where exact phrases are used, when the ideas expressed are not one's own. It is not acceptable to use the words of others or their creative output (whether published or unpublished, or from the internet) without explicit acknowledgement. Students must use the correct referencing conventions for their discipline and use quotation marks if quoting directly from an information source.
As one means of detecting plagiarism, schools use detection software (Turnitin) to check assignments for evidence of plagiarism. Plagiarism information and advice can be found online at: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/is/library/findinginformation/plagiarism/ as well as in student handbooks. Schools also ask students to confirm that the work is their own and is not plagiarised by signing a declaration on essay cover sheets.

8.2.2 Cheating

Students need to ensure that working with other students does not lead to academic misconduct such as cheating or collusion. The University's Examination Regulations contain full details of the procedures to be followed in respect of academic misconduct.

Schools will clearly define areas of academic misconduct (plagiarism, collusion, cheating, impersonation, falsifying research data and the use of inadmissible material) and the procedures and penalties that apply, in school handbooks.

8.3 Late submission and non-submission of work

Timely submission of assessments by deadlines is one component of professional conduct. Students will be provided with information on the deadline dates for assignments and penalties for non-submission as well as the procedure for the granting of extensions (where there are specific and valid reasons). All assignments should be submitted by the deadline specified in school handbooks (typically either 12.00 or 17.00 on the day/date required).

In order not to disadvantage students, who hand in their work on time, late submission penalties, including deduction of marks, are imposed on assignments received after the deadline. Students should be aware of the existence of penalties for not meeting deadlines. These should be clearly specified in writing to students and staff at the beginning of the programme and unit, preferably in the programme and/or unit handbook.

Faculties should ensure that their penalties for the late submission of work are in accordance with the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes. (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/assessment/).

Students submitting work late, with a specific and valid reason, will need to follow previously stated school procedures (e.g. in the student handbook) including seeking an extension, in advance, for the late submission of assessed work, where feasible. Evidence may be requested for consideration by the unit director and/or Special Circumstances Committee (see the relevant section of the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes).
9 The Dissertation

The dissertation/research project is an exercise in independent research. Students will receive guidance but ultimately the dissertation/research project has to be the student’s own work.

The Master’s Level Descriptor in Annex 2 gives some indication of what is expected.

For most postgraduate Master’s awards, a dissertation of 60 credit points is required. Postgraduate Master’s awards with an enhanced research component normally require a dissertation or dissertations of between 90 and 120 credit points. Dissertation requirements are outlined in individual programme specifications.

Dissertation Guidelines for Taught Postgraduate Programmes (Annex 5) cover general guidance, preparation and format of the dissertation. Schools may provide detailed guidance for students where applicable.

9.1 Oversight of the dissertation process

Each school is responsible for assuring the quality of the dissertation experience for its students and for overseeing the allocation of dissertation supervisors.

Responsibility of the School:

Each student must be assigned a dissertation supervisor by the start of the dissertation component.

Students will receive information and guidance on the dissertation process, the standards expected and the normal number of contact hours that apply. As a minimum, students can expect to receive information in a school handbook (or equivalent) and guidance in a designated dissertation workshop, seminar, work session and/or unit.

Students will be provided with the faculty or school norms on the reading of draft section(s) of the dissertation that will apply (once only is the norm in many but not all schools) and information on the amount of formative feedback that will be given during the process.

Students must be provided with relevant legal and regulatory information and guidance e.g. health and safety, research ethics, copyright, data protection, plagiarism, criminal records bureau checks procedures.

If a student's research requires working elsewhere (e.g. in industry, fieldwork), the school should ensure that appropriate supervisory/personal tutor arrangements, understood by the student, are in place to cover periods spent away from the University.

Students will be informed of the independent sources of help and advice that are available if a problem arises during the dissertation process e.g. Programme Director, personal tutor.

In schools where a dissertation or research project has a placement element or a student spends time at a company location, the dissertation supervisor and the safety officer will normally seek to ensure student safety, for example, by ensuring that the company has a safety code of practice. Organisers of placements will be familiar with the University’s Guidelines on Student Placements in Taught Programmes (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/placements/).
9.2 Dissertation supervisors' knowledge, skills and workload

Dissertation supervisors are selected on the basis that they have the necessary skills and expertise relevant to production of the dissertation, and are available to support the student during the dissertation period.

Dissertation supervisors should have an awareness of the academic standards and requirements of the programme as well as the needs of different types of students.

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

9.3 The Dissertation Supervisor Role

Dissertation supervisors support taught postgraduate students during the production of their dissertation, research project/research report or equivalent. The way in which this supervisory process works will depend on the academic discipline and the related research environment, subject to the general requirements set out below. Therefore, this Code is not prescriptive about the required level of contact between the student and dissertation supervisor. However, schools will specify the minimum level of contact in school handbooks.

In addition to their supervisor(s), students will normally have access to a range of individuals who are able to provide support of different kinds. Students need to understand in detail the support structure operating in their school, which is outlined in school handbooks.

Schools and dissertation supervisors seek to enhance the dissertation experience for students in a number of ways. Examples include: 1) holding generic dissertation workshops/seminars on the research plan, research methodologies, referencing, and research ethics (if applicable), 2) requiring students to give a 10 minute presentation on their research plan to their student cohort, and 3) encouraging students to establish reading groups where dissertation ideas and plans may be discussed with other students.

Responsibility of the Dissertation Supervisor:

The dissertation supervisor will give guidance on the nature of the dissertation and the standard of work to be expected.

S/he will advise students on planning the dissertation and discuss the timetable and applicable dates for completion of different stages.

S/he will be knowledgeable about the general or specific research area in which the student is working towards the dissertation and will have an understanding of University policies and procedures as outlined in the Code of Practice.

S/he will advise the student on training necessary for completion of the dissertation, e.g. statistical or software courses, which may include referral to other sources of help and advice.

S/he will advise on techniques, research methods, research ethics and other relevant issues (e.g. criminal records check procedures, intellectual property), and will encourage the student to become aware of recent developments in the research area.
S/he will maintain contact with the student through dissertation meetings, as detailed in school handbooks.

Supervision and advice may include email or telephone contact where appropriate, e.g. when a student is doing fieldwork away from Bristol.

S/he will propose adequate arrangements for supervision of students during study leave (or unavoidable absence) to the Programme Director or Head of School, as applicable.

The dissertation supervisor will not proof-read or edit the work as this is the responsibility of the student.

Where re-assessment of the dissertation is permitted by the Examination Board, the dissertation supervisor will seek to ensure that the student knows what is required for re-submission, i.e. understands the feedback given by the examiners.

Guidance on whether the draft dissertation will be read and the support available is outlined in school handbooks. In programmes where a specified proportion of the draft dissertation is read by the dissertation supervisor, s/he may normally comment on the following as applicable: dissertation or report structure, content of sections, research sources and methodology, referencing and style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9.4 Student responsibilities during the dissertation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility of the Student:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students must agree a suitable dissertation topic with the dissertation supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students must attend dissertation workshops and seminars (where provided) and be familiar with relevant school information on the dissertation process, e.g. school handbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students should agree a schedule of meetings with their dissertation supervisor at the start of the process, initiate meetings, attend all scheduled meetings and presentations and remain in contact during the period of the dissertation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students should work on a research plan in consultation with the dissertation supervisor, work on their dissertation taking account of their advice and guidance and submit work by set deadlines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students should raise any problems they are having with the dissertation, with the dissertation supervisor, at an early opportunity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students should ensure that ethical or statutory checks are carried out early in the dissertation process so that the progress of their research is not delayed. Criminal records bureau, research ethics or intellectual property checks or approval may take some weeks or months to complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are responsible for their own progress in the dissertation and must keep the dissertation supervisor informed of their overall progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where required by the school, students must provide the dissertation supervisor with a draft section of the dissertation by the specified deadline, in accordance with school dissertation guidelines. Students must submit the dissertation within the normal study period for the programme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students are responsible for their own work and for the quality and standard of the dissertation submission. They should proof-read the final draft, ensure it is legible and check that both citation and referencing have been done to the required standard.

Where the Examination Board permits re-assessment of the dissertation, the student must take account of the feedback from examiners to improve his/her performance in the re-submission.

9.5 Submission of the dissertation

The dissertation/research project must normally be submitted by 15 September. Faculties may alter this deadline date for part-time and professional Master’s programmes. Information on submission procedures and submission deadlines are published in faculty and/or school handbooks.

The dissertation must be a student’s own work. A student may not include in any dissertation (or equivalent), material previously submitted and approved for an award of a degree at this or any other university.

9.6 Assessment of the dissertation

Assessment of the dissertation will be in accordance with the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/assessment/).

The minimum pass mark for the dissertation is 50 out of 100.

9.7 Re-submission of the Dissertation

Decisions on dissertation re-submission can only be made by the Faculty Examination Board. Where the Board decides that re-submission of the dissertation is not permitted, the reason will be clearly documented in the meeting minutes.

The dissertation or equivalent can normally be re-submitted where a student has achieved a mark of at least 40 out of 100 in the original submission and where, in addition, the examiners suggest that it is suitable for re-assessment. Faculties have the discretion to raise this threshold but not to lower it.

Re-submission of the dissertation where the student has achieved a mark less than 40 out of 100 will only be permitted where the failure is due to certified illness or other sufficient cause.

A pass in a re-submitted dissertation/research project will be awarded a maximum pass mark of 50 out of 100, except where there is good cause for the initial failed assessment e.g. medical and other extenuating circumstances (see the Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes for guidance).

Re-submission of the dissertation is not possible where a pass mark (50 or more out of 100) has already been recorded.

Re-submission of the dissertation must normally be made within 3 months of the student being notified by the Faculty Examination Board (and within 6 months for part-time students and 12 months for part-time variable students).
Where re-assessment in the dissertation is not permitted the student may be awarded a postgraduate diploma, if appropriate, by the Faculty Examination Board, subject to the satisfactory accumulation of sufficient credit points.
10 Feedback mechanisms

Feedback from students is valued as it enables the University to enhance both the quality of its teaching and the student experience. The University seeks feedback from taught postgraduates in a number of ways, for example, through the annual evaluation of taught programme and unit questionnaires and through student representation on University committees. Feedback is also gathered through the student complaints process. The University has developed Guidelines for Direct Feedback from Students:
http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/policy/feedback.html. A key part of these Guidelines is that student feedback should occur, be seen to occur and should have outcomes which are recorded and fed back to students.

Some specific examples of current practice for obtaining feedback from taught postgraduates are given below:

10.1 Staff/Student Liaison Committees

All schools have staff/student liaison committees or equivalent which form a key part of the school’s quality assurance processes. These committees normally include relevant academic staff, such as programme directors, the Director of Graduate Studies (or equivalent), postgraduate administrative staff and taught postgraduate students.

Staff/student liaison committees normally include both postgraduates and undergraduates to ensure representation of all students’ views. However, schools may hold a separate committee for postgraduates on a particular taught programme or a general postgraduate staff/student liaison committee, as appropriate.

Staff/student liaison committee meetings will normally take place at least once per Teaching Block and minutes of the meeting, and a record of any recommended actions, will be taken. Meetings provide taught postgraduates with an opportunity to raise specific or general issues on their experience as students at the University. Responding to feedback received from students is a key part of good practice. Recommendations on teaching or resource requests should be referred to the appropriate school committees. Students may be invited to attend relevant meetings and should receive feedback on the decision taken.

Taught postgraduate student representatives will also have the opportunity to attend relevant faculty bodies (e.g. Graduate Studies Committee, School Learning and Teaching Committee or Student Forum), as specified in school and faculty handbooks. Students should have the opportunity to comment on changes to taught postgraduate programmes including assessment and new programme proposals.

Election of postgraduate student representatives is covered as follows:

Recruitment of student representatives is a key challenge for schools. It is, therefore, important that the following points are considered when seeking to recruit student representatives:

- The benefits of student representation should be emphasised when publicising vacancies. Email advertisement of student representative vacancies may be beneficial.
- Talks by student representatives of the Students’ Union during induction week may be effective in attracting student volunteers.
- Election of student representatives by their peers creates confidence in students. Email elections can be effective.
- Student representation can be enhanced by the creation of student representative email lists as well as enabling student representatives to use
10.2 Student feedback on programmes and units

Student feedback is used to inform taught programme development and enhance academic standards. The University uses both ‘end of programme’ and unit questionnaires to seek anonymous feedback from taught postgraduates. Data are analysed and used for the Annual Programme Review, as described in 2.2 of this Code. Students who complete questionnaires receive information on the way that their feedback has been acted on via published school channels.

10.3 Student feedback and the diversity of the student experience

Students who work while studying on part-time or part-time variable programmes may not wish to attend staff/student liaison committees or feed back in the same way as full-time students. Schools should seek feedback and views in a variety of ways appropriate to the student cohort, e.g. via online methods including Blackboard, email, questionnaires or virtual meetings. Student feedback should be used to ascertain the effectiveness of these alternative methods.

All taught postgraduate students should have the opportunity to raise relevant issues with their pastoral support team, unit tutors and programme directors as set out in section 5, Academic and Pastoral Support.

10.4 The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)

PTES is an annual online questionnaire designed by the Higher Education Academy to collect feedback from taught postgraduates in order to enhance the quality of taught postgraduate degree provision. Students are encouraged to complete this online questionnaire in April/May each year. The results are analysed by UGSC and used to formulate an action plan.

As a minimum, taught postgraduates are able to provide feedback on their experience through the following mechanisms:

At University level: Student representation at Council, Senate, Education Committee, and the Student Affairs Committee.

At Faculty level: Student representation at relevant faculty committees; providing feedback on their experiences to Faculty Quality Assurance Teams.

At School level: Student representation at staff/student liaison committees. Students may also express views through ‘End of programme’ and unit questionnaires as well as through PTES. Students are also asked to provide their views during School Reviews.
11 Student complaints and appeals

The complaints and appeals procedures open to students are 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/ and in the University Student Handbook issued to all students at registration. Schools will ensure that all students are made aware of how to raise an individual or collective concern and how to make a formal complaint or appeal. Students also need to know how to obtain confidential advice on academic and other issues.

Problems raised at an early stage are more likely to be resolved quickly and effectively. Students should raise any issue that concerns them informally with the appropriate person, who may be, for example, the Programme Director, unit director or dissertation supervisor. If they are unable to discuss the issue with the relevant person they should approach the school’s nominated person in charge of taught postgraduate programmes or the Head of School. Problems that cannot be resolved within the school may be referred to the Faculty’s Graduate Education Director.

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

There is a wide range of sources of help and advice for students; detailed information is provided in the Student Help site on the University’s website: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/studenthelp/. The website includes links to ‘Just Ask’, the Students’ Union Advice and Representation Centre, and its professional student advisers and the student sabbatical officers for education and welfare.

If informal methods fail to secure a satisfactory resolution of the problem, students have recourse to the formal complaints procedure. This is described in the Rules and Regulations for Students.

The procedure for making an appeal against a decision of a Board of Examiners can be found in section 11 of the Examination Regulations: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html

The University Graduate Studies Committee is responsible for the annual monitoring of taught postgraduate student formal complaints and appeals. It comments on the annual report of the Student Complaints Officer and makes appropriate recommendations to the University Education Committee.
### DEFINITION OF TERMS - STANDARD TERMINOLOGY

Source of specific terms: 'Higher education credit framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England', August 2008, Quality Assurance Agency, the University’s Student Handbook and the University’s ‘Regulations and Code of Practice for the Assessment and Progression of Students on Taught Programmes’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic session</strong></td>
<td>The University’s teaching year, made up of three terms, running from late September/early October to mid-June the following year. For most postgraduate Master’s degree students, the period of study extends throughout the summer vacation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accreditation of prior learning (APL)</strong></td>
<td>The identification, assessment and formal acknowledgement of prior learning and achievement. This may be either certificated learning (APCL) or prior experiential learning (APEL) where learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and recognised for academic purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anonymous marking</strong></td>
<td>The identity of students is not revealed to markers and/or the Board of Examiners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>A generic term for processes that measure students’ learning, skills and understanding. Assessment can be diagnostic, formative or summative. Diagnostic Assessment - enables attributes or skills to be identified in the learner that suggest appropriate pathways of study, or learning difficulties that require support and resolution. Formative Assessment - designed to enable the learner to receive feedback on his/her progress in meeting stated objectives (learning outcomes) and reviewing goals. Summative Assessment – provides the means whereby a clear statement of achievement or failure can be made in respect of a student’s performance in relation to stated objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment</strong></td>
<td>A piece of coursework (e.g. project or essay) to be completed by a student. The marks may or may not count towards a student’s overall degree result.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Code of Practice</strong></td>
<td>A documented set of recommended or preferred processes and procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compensation</strong></td>
<td>A discretionary process whereby a Board of Examiners (ratified by the Faculty) makes an award to a student who has achieved the overall average pass mark for the taught component, has met the overall learning outcomes of the programme but has failed to achieve a pass mark in a unit(s) of not more than 30 cps. Such decisions will take account of a candidate’s overall performance and profile. Compensation will not normally apply to many professional or professionally-accredited programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit points</strong></td>
<td>Credit points are awarded to a learner in recognition of the verified achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit accumulation</strong></td>
<td>The process of achieving credits over time in relation to a planned programme of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit transfer</strong></td>
<td>A mechanism which allows credit awarded for a higher education (HE) awarding body to be recognised, quantified and included towards the credit requirements for a programmes delivered by another HE provider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit value</strong></td>
<td>The number of credits, at a particular level, assigned to a body of learning. The number of credits is based on the estimated notional learning hours (where one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS)</strong></td>
<td>A system which enables learners to accumulate credit and which facilitates the transfer of that credit within and between education providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Debtor</strong></td>
<td>A person owing money to the University e.g. tuition or accommodation fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dissertation Supervisor</strong></td>
<td>A member of the academic staff assigned to a taught postgraduate student undertaking a dissertation to provide academic guidance and personal support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade</strong></td>
<td>In subjects where it is not possible to assign a precise mark, or where a school deems it appropriate to disclose student results within a band, a grade may be used (e.g. A, B, C).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Statement of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 7/M</strong></td>
<td>Master's level, which may apply to units and programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mark</strong></td>
<td>A numerical value by which a Board of Examiners assesses the performance of a student. A mark is normally on a scale linked to the specified criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marking criteria</strong></td>
<td>The learning outcome knowledge, understanding and skills requirements that are taken into account in awarding assessment marks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mitigating circumstances</strong></td>
<td>Reasons (such as illness, accident or severe personal or family problems) put forward by a student, with supporting evidence, to the Board of Examiners in advance of the Board's meeting, to explain absence from or poor performance in an assessment or series of assessments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moderation</strong></td>
<td>A quality assurance process whereby the marks of a cohort of students are reviewed, to ensure that the individual marks awarded are appropriate in terms of consistency, fairness and rigour in the assessment. Methods include sampling or additional marking of borderlines and fails or where there is significant disparity between different markers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Module/Unit** | A self-contained, formally structured, learning experience with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria.  
**Mandatory unit** – A core unit on a programme which must be studied by a student.  
**Optional unit** – A unit chosen by a student from a specified list of units available on a particular programme. |
<p>| <strong>Notional hours of learning</strong> | The number of hours which it is expected that a learner (at a particular level) will spend, on average, to achieve the specified learning outcomes at that level. |
| <strong>Penalty/Penalties</strong> | Action taken by the University when a student does not comply with University regulations, which has a consequence for the student. Penalties may be imposed for the late submission of work or for plagiarism. Penalties to be imposed are defined in relevant University Regulations and Codes. |
| <strong>Personal Tutor</strong> | A member of academic staff in the student’s school who is his/her first point of contact for any personal or academic problems. All postgraduates are assigned a Personal Tutor and are expected to meet with him/her at regular intervals. |
| <strong>Plagiarism</strong> | Plagiarism is the unacknowledged inclusion in a piece of work of material derived from the published or unpublished work of another, whether intentional or unintentional. This includes material obtained from the internet. Students submitting work for assessment must acknowledge all sources of information correctly and confirm that the work is his/her work alone. Proven cases of plagiarism attract a range of penalties which are detailed in the University Examination Regulations. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regulations</th>
<th>Rules designed to govern conduct.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>A formal structured course of study which leads to an award, such as a Master’s degree, postgraduate diploma or certificate. The structure of each taught programme is available in the Programme Catalogue: <a href="https://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/unitprogcat/AboutProgrammes.jsa">https://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/unitprogcat/AboutProgrammes.jsa</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress</td>
<td>All students are required to make satisfactory academic progress before being allowed to progress to the dissertation stage (most postgraduate Master’s programmes). Students on taught programmes are required to achieve a certain level of attainment, and to have acquired a certain number of credit points, as laid down in the relevant programme regulations, in order to progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification descriptors</td>
<td>Generic statements of the outcomes of study for the main qualification at each level which exemplify the nature and characteristics of that qualification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-sit / Re-assessment</td>
<td>Students on taught programmes who do not achieve a pass mark in summative assessment may be offered one further opportunity to be re-assessed in up to 60 cps of units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Block</td>
<td>Although, for attendance purposes, the year is broken up into three terms, teaching on taught programmes is delivered in two 12-week teaching blocks (or semesters), followed by a 5-week assessment period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>A teaching period of about 10 weeks. The autumn term is followed by the Christmas vacation (approximately 4 weeks), the spring term is followed by the Easter vacation (approx. 4 weeks) and the summer term is followed by the summer vacation (approx. 14 weeks)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DESCRIP'TOR FOR A HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATION
AT LEVEL 7: MASTER'S DEGREE

‘The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland’, August 2008 (Quality Assurance Agency) has the following qualification descriptor for Master’s degrees which sets out:
• the intended outcomes of study, the achievement of which are assessed;
• a statement on the wider abilities that the typical student could be expected to have developed.

The descriptor provided for this level of the framework is for any master's degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other level 7 qualifications, including postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas.

Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

• a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
• a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
• originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
• conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  o to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
  o to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

• deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
• demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
• continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

And holders will have:

• the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  o the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  o decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
  o the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

39 Much of the study undertaken for master's degrees will have been at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Students will have shown originality in the application of knowledge, and they will understand how the
boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show originality in tackling and solving problems. They will have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments.

40 Master's degrees are awarded after completion of taught courses, programmes of research or a mixture of both. Longer, research-based programmes may lead to the degree of MPhil. The learning outcomes of most master's degree courses are achieved on the basis of study equivalent to at least one full-time calendar year and are taken by graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours (or equivalent achievement).

41 Master's degrees are often distinguished from other qualifications at this level (for example, advanced short courses, which often form parts of continuing professional development programmes and lead to postgraduate certificates and/or postgraduate diplomas) by an increased intensity, complexity and density of study. Master's degrees - in comparison to postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas - typically include planned intellectual progression that often includes a synoptic/research or scholarly activity.

42 Some master's degrees, for example in science, engineering and mathematics, comprise an integrated programme of study spanning several levels where the outcomes are normally achieved through study equivalent to four full-time academic years. While the final outcomes of the qualifications themselves meet the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 in full, such qualifications are often termed 'integrated master's' as an acknowledgement of the additional period of study at lower levels (which typically meets the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 6).

43 First degrees in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science comprise an integrated programme of study and professional practice spanning several levels. While the final outcomes of the qualifications themselves typically meet the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7, these qualifications may often retain, for historical reasons, titles of Bachelor of Medicine, and Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Dental Surgery, Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine or Bachelor of Veterinary Science, and are abbreviated to MBChB or BM BS, BDS, BVetMed and BVSc respectively.

Source:

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI08/default.asp
INDEPENDENT AND SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

The concept of independent learning differs in each programme/discipline and may encompass one or more of the following definitions:

“Students are in control of their learning and personal development, can manage their time effectively while studying and can link academic work to a practice or work setting.”

“Students actively seek new knowledge e.g. they research and explore a topic that is not directly covered in lectures/seminars and seek to ask questions, solve problems analytically and think about concepts and ideas within a wider context. Students have to be self-reliant.”

“Students make the most of opportunities to self-reflect critically and to explore their experiences, challenge current beliefs and develop new practices and understandings.”

“After directed reading, students read around the topic, do preparation, participate in learning and set goals for their research project and choose the reading for their topic. The assignment may be open-ended in terms of outcomes, so students compare and contrast ideas before drawing conclusions. There are elements of original research in the dissertation.”

“Independent learning involves students in finding out new knowledge and taking a deep approach to that knowledge (not shallow). It involves peer review of the literature, collaborative working as well as developing critical skills in order to formulate an argument for the assignment or dissertation. It is the ability to be a reflective practitioner.”

“The concept of independent learning underpins the whole programme. Students have to talk about their ideas in seminars, think around the research they read and do research. They have to structure their essays in a certain way, write a framework for their argument and reach conclusions. They have to be self-motivated to research and write the dissertation.”

“Students have to be independent but the support is there if they need it. Students take part in on-line learning sessions and they have to prioritise their reading as the reading list is extensive. Students can choose what to write on so they are able to reflect on their own practice. In a sense they can direct their own learning.”

“Students have to be very motivated as the programme is required continuing professional development. To an extent, they are steered and the assessment guides them. Patient/treatment case experience will dictate the learning experience.”

“Students are motivated to develop and practise examples at an advanced level and to master and demonstrate techniques and skills during assessment.”

“Students experience learning, try out new things and practise them. Learning is interactive and students must carry out laboratory work which can be open-ended. Students have to do impact and value analysis.”

Source: Quotes and comments from Taught Postgraduate Directors, 2008.
## ANNEX 4

### FORM 1 – ACCREDITED PRIOR (EXPERIENTIAL) LEARNING FORM

University of Bristol

**Recommendation for Approval of an Individual Application for Exemption from units - Accreditation of Prior (Certified) Learning (AP(C)L)**

### A. To be completed by applicant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Programme applied for:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. I request exemption in respect of relevant units in the above programme.
2. I enclose original or authenticated copies of transcripts or other evidence of units/modules taken at another institution and, where available, of the marks obtained in these modules.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Signed:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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</table>

### B. To be completed by Admissions Tutor or Programme Director as appropriate

I recommend that the applicant named above be granted exemption from the year of study or units, as indicated below, within the programme applied for on the grounds of the attached evidence of prior learning

(a) Exemption with no transfer of marks from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Study</th>
<th>or specific units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(provide year)</td>
<td>(please list below)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UoB Unit Code</th>
<th>Unit Title</th>
<th>Credit Points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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OR

(b) Exemption with transfer of marks from the following units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Code</th>
<th>Unit Title</th>
<th>Credit Points</th>
<th>Mark to be transferred</th>
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<tr>
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</table>
C. For completion by the Graduate or Undergraduate Education Director

Either * I support the above recommendation and forward it to the Faculty Office for report to Faculty Board
or * I do not support the above recommendation on the grounds below (and am returning it to the admissions tutor/programme director to notify the applicant):

(Please return to the admissions tutor/programme director)

Date of notification to applicant, Director of Teaching and Learning*/Admissions Tutor*/Programme Director*/Faculty Office*

Date ............................................

*Delete as appropriate
NOTIFICATION OF WITHDRAWAL / EXTERNAL TRANSFER

The University collects and holds withdrawal data for administrative, academic and statutory reasons. All student data are collected, processed and disclosed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be treated as confidential. Monitoring reasons for withdrawal also helps the University to improve its services to current and prospective students.

Please complete Sections A & B and return to your School with any relevant documentation: (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION A (STUDENT - PERSONAL DETAILS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student No. .................................. Date of Birth .................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Name .................................. First Name(s) .................................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of Study .................................. Programme Title ............................................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION B (STUDENT - REASONS FOR WITHDRAWAL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please state your reason for withdrawal by ticking one of the boxes below. If more than one reason applies, please select the reasons by ranking in order of priority (1 being main reason).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 Transferred to another institution* ☐ 07 Other personal reasons* ☐ I do not want to disclose my reasons ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 Health reasons* ☐ 10 Gone into employment ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 Financial reasons* ☐ 11 Other* ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please provide further information by selecting your reason(s) for withdrawal below.

Programme (unsuitable) ☐ Programme (other) ☐ Tuition fees ☐ Moved area/region ☐
Programme (too difficult) ☐ Accommodation difficulties (residences) ☐ Financial (debt) ☐ Personal illness ☐
Programme (too easy) ☐ Accommodation difficulties (private/parental) ☐ Financial (other) ☐ Family reasons ☐
Programme (tutor) ☐ Social adjustment/isolation ☐ Childcare reasons ☐ Other ☐

Please use the space below if you wish to write a brief explanation of the circumstances of your withdrawal. Alternatively, submit your reasons in a sealed envelope addressed to the Faculty Head of Academic Administration in your Faculty Office.

Did you use any University pastoral care support e.g. Counselling Services? YES ☐ NO ☐
I confirm that I wish to withdraw from my programme of study Signature (Student) ............................................
Last date of attendance ........................................... Current date: ..................

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION C (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where the student has NOT completed or is unable to complete Section B, please indicate the reason for leaving below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Signature ............................................. Date received ............................................. Last Date of Attendance ..................................
| (Head of School) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION D (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE FACULTY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Refund ☐ Part Refund ☐ No Refund ☐ (please tick the appropriate box)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enter amount to be refunded £ .......................... Income Office to raise credit note? YES ☐ NO ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorised Signature ..........................................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date received ................................................ SITS updated YES ☐ NO ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION E (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE INCOME OFFICE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date credit note raised .................................. Authorised signature .............................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount refunded £ ..........................................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why do we need a standard withdrawal form?

The University collects and holds withdrawal data for administrative, academic and statutory reasons. All student data are collected, processed and disclosed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be treated as confidential. Monitoring reasons for withdrawal also helps the University to improve its services to current and prospective students.

In what circumstances should a withdrawal form be completed?

All students are encouraged to complete a withdrawal form if they wish to withdraw completely from the University or transfer to another institution (additional documentation such as medical evidence or a letter can also be accepted).

Does a withdrawal form need to be completed if the student has verbally informed academic or administrative staff of his/her intention to withdraw/transfer externally?

YES, especially if the student requires any sort of refund of tuition fees. The Income Office cannot refund student tuition fees if they have not received notification of withdrawal/external transfer using the relevant form (Form W1).

Does a withdrawal form need to be completed if the student has informed staff of his/her intention to withdraw/transfer externally by letter?

NO although we wish to encourage students to complete the form as well as submitting a letter as it helps central support services monitor withdrawals.

Where should the student send the withdrawal form?

Section A & B should be completed by the student and sent to the School.

How does the School process the form?

Section C should be completed by the School and signed by the Head of School. If Section D (to be completed by the Faculty Office) is blank, forward a copy of the form to the Faculty Office.

How does the Faculty Office process the form?

Section D should be completed by the Faculty Office. Once completed, send one copy to the Income Office and one copy to the Student Systems & Information Office.

(If Section C is blank when you receive the form, please also forward a copy to the School)
This form must be signed by all relevant personnel and then returned to the Faculty Office for Graduate Education Director approval. The data will be used to update the student’s record on SITS and will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. All visa-holding students who change from full-time study to another status MUST be reported immediately to the Faculty Office for report to the UK Border Agency.

C. STUDENT DETAILS (to be completed by the Postgraduate Administrator in the School)

| FACULTY |  |
| STUDENT NUMBER |  |
| STUDENT NAME |  |
| SCHOOL |  |
| PERSONAL TUTOR OR SUPERVISOR(S) |  |
| PROGRAMME OF STUDY |  |
| MODE OF ATTENDANCE (FT / PT / PV / WRITING UP) |  |
| PROGRAMME START DATE |  |
| PROGRAMME END DATE |  |
| DATES OF PREVIOUS SUSPENSIONS OR EXTENSIONS (IF APPLICABLE) |  |

B. TAUGHT POSTGRADUATES – Change of Circumstance

| Transfer from Master’s to Postgraduate Diploma | Reason: |
| Yes ☐ (Please tick if applicable) |  |

| Transfer from MSc to Postgraduate Certificate |  |
| Yes ☐ (Please tick if applicable) |  |

| Transfer from Postgraduate Diploma to Master’s |  |
| Yes ☐ (Please tick if applicable) |  |

| Transfer from Postgraduate Certificate to Postgraduate Diploma / Master’s |  |
| Yes ☐ (Please tick if applicable) |  |

| Change of Master’s programme |  |
| Yes ☐ (Please tick if applicable) |  |

N.B. This change will require both the approval of the new Programme Director
and the previous Programme Director (see signature section below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in mode of attendance</th>
<th>New Programme fee:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes □ (Please tick if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current mode of attendance:
FT □   PT □   PV □   Writing Up □

New mode of attendance:
FT □   PT □   PV □   Writing Up □

N.B. Full-time visa-holding students are not permitted to transfer to part-time or part-time variable study. Guidance must be sought from International Office staff in advance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

C. SIGNATURES

Programme Director(s) for taught postgraduate students to check form and sign:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Second signature required for programme transfers only)

Graduate Education Director approval:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please retain a copy of this Form for school files and send an original copy to the Postgraduate Co-ordinator in the Faculty Office. Electronic and paper files will be updated. The student and school will also receive written confirmation of this change of circumstance.

FACULTY OFFICE USE ONLY

SITS RECORD UPDATED:       (dd/mm/yy)
FDU UPDATED AND SENT TO FINANCE OFFICE (if applicable):  (dd/mm/yy)
LETTER GENERATED:         (dd/mm/yy)
**SECTION A – STUDENT AND SUSPENSION DETAILS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Number:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Title:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present mode of attendance:</td>
<td>Full time / Part time / Part-time variable (Please delete as appropriate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of entry:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current maximum study date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of proposed suspension: (in months)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates of proposed suspension:</td>
<td>From: To:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous suspension</td>
<td>From: To:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New maximum study date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for suspension of study:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Please attach medical or other evidence where necessary)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SECTION B – INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ONLY**

I confirm that I am aware that this change could affect my immigration status in the UK and that the University is required to report changes in status to the UK Border Agency. Please see the International Advice & Support's website for detailed immigration guidance and staff contact details: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/studentsupport/immigration](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/studentsupport/immigration)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student signature:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**SECTION C – ACADEMIC APPROVAL BY SCHOOL AND FACULTY**

As Programme Director, I confirm that the student has discussed his/her suspension with me and I recommend approval of the request as it is academically viable and complies with the ‘good reasons’ guidance in section 6 of the Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Director:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director of Graduate Studies:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Education Director:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suspension of Study for Taught Postgraduate Programmes
Guidance and Procedure Notes

The University expects students to complete their study in a single continuous period. Its academic procedures are designed to assist student progress.

1. A suspension of study will interrupt a student’s progress on his/her programme and will only be granted where there are good grounds and supporting documentation (e.g. a medical note from a GP).

2. Good grounds for a suspension of study may include the following: serious and persistent health problems, significant long-term disability, significant bereavement or additional sole caring responsibilities, serious financial problems or new employment which brings more senior managerial responsibilities, mandatory military service.

3. Requests should be made on the attached form and be accompanied by any relevant supporting documents, such as medical evidence or correspondence. Requests should be sent initially to the Programme Director and/or the Head of School.

4. The School will forward the completed suspension form to the Graduate Education Director, and certify that the student has made satisfactory progress so far.

5. There may be additional rules on suspensions from a funding body. It is the responsibility of the student to confirm that arrangements and approval for the suspension have been secured with any funding body that is involved. Students in receipt of a studentship should note that Research Council or UoB studentship funding will cease during the period of suspension.

6. Graduate Education Directors have the authority to approve suspensions for a maximum of 12 months. In exceptional cases (e.g. maternity leave, disability), a suspension of up to 24 months in total may be granted by Faculty Education Directors. After this period, the student should either re-register using any credit points as Accredited Prior Learning (APL) or withdraw.

7. The length of the period of suspension granted should match, as closely as possible, the time required by the circumstances that necessitate the suspension. The period of suspension will necessarily extend the student’s maximum study period by the same period.

8. Suspensions will not normally be approved if they are backdated for more than one month.

9. **International students** – Any change to your student status, such as a suspension of study, could affect your immigration status in the UK. The University is required to report any changes in status to the UK Border Agency. The International Office provides guidance and advice to visa-holding students who are seeking a suspension of study. Please see the website for further information: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/studentsupport/immigration](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/studentsupport/immigration)

Please see section 6.4 of the Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes for details on the procedure: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/pg/pgtcodeonline.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/pg/pgtcodeonline.html)
# EXTENSION OF STUDIES REQUEST FORM FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

## SECTION A – STUDENT AND EXTENSION DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Number:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Title:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present mode of attendance:</td>
<td>Full time / Part time / Part-time variable (Please delete as appropriate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of entry:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current normal study end date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of proposed extension:</td>
<td>(in months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates of proposed extension:</td>
<td>From: To:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New maximum study date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reason for extension of study:**

(Please attach medical or other evidence where necessary)

**Has approval of funding body been secured for the extension if necessary:** YES / NO

(Student to complete if necessary)

**Student signature**

Only required if the supporting documentation does not include evidence directly from the student.

## SECTION B – INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ONLY

I confirm that I am aware that this change could affect my immigration status in the UK and that the University is required to report changes in status to the UK Border Agency. Please see the International Advice & Support's website for detailed immigration guidance and staff contact details: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/studentsupport/immigration](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/studentsupport/immigration)

**Student signature:** ………………………………………………….. **Date:** ………………………..

## SECTION C – ACADEMIC APPROVAL BY SCHOOL AND FACULTY

As Programme Director, I confirm that the student has discussed his/her extension request with me and I recommend approval of the request as it complies with the ‘good reasons’ guidance in section 6 of the Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes.

**Programme Director:** ................................... **Date:** ........................................

**Director of Graduate Studies:** ………………………………. **Date:** …………………………

**Graduate Education Director:** ………………………............. **Date:** ........................................

**Education Pro Vice-Chancellor:** ....................................... **Date:** ........................................

*(Where appropriate, for extensions over 12 months).*
Extension of Study for Taught Postgraduate Programmes – Guidance and Procedure Notes

The University expects students to complete their study in a single continuous period. Its academic procedures are designed to assist student progress.

1. Extensions are used where exceptional circumstances necessitate extension of the normal period of study of the degree to complete the dissertation or equivalent and may involve the payment of additional fees.

2. An extension of study will only be granted where there are strong grounds and supporting documentation (e.g. a medical note from a GP) and when a student requires additional time to complete the dissertation or equivalent. There will need to be clear evidence of satisfactory student progress for an extension request to be granted.

3. Good grounds for an extension of study may include the following: serious and persistent health problems, significant long-term disability, significant bereavement or additional sole caring responsibilities, serious financial problems or new employment which brings more senior managerial responsibilities, mandatory military service.

4. Requests should be made on the attached form and be accompanied by any relevant supporting documents, such as medical evidence or correspondence. Requests should be sent initially to the Director of Graduate Studies (or nominee) and/or the Head of School.

5. Permission for an extension will not normally be given unless the application is made well before the end of the period of study and there are compelling reasons.

6. The Programme Director or nominee should forward written support for the extension to the Graduate Education Director, and certify that the student has made satisfactory progress so far.

7. There may be additional rules on extensions from a funding body. It is the responsibility of the student to confirm that arrangements and approval for the suspension have been secured with any funding body that is involved e.g. Research Council.

8. Graduate Education Directors have the authority to sign off one or more extensions totalling a 12 month period. Extensions in excess of 12 months require the approval of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students). In all cases the extension request should be sent initially from the School to the Graduate Education Director of the Faculty.

9. **International students** – Any change to your student status, such as an extension of study, could affect your immigration status in the UK. The University is required to report any changes in status to the UK Border Agency. The International Office provides guidance and advice to visa-holding students who are seeking a suspension of study. Please see the website for further information: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/studentsupport/immigration](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/studentsupport/immigration)

Please see section 6.4 of the Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes for details on the procedure: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/pg/pgtcodeonline.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/pg/pgtcodeonline.html)
The University has produced generic guidelines to aid current practice. Schools may adopt their own guidelines which will be subject to annual monitoring and future harmonisation at Faculty level.

PREPARATION

Schools will provide students with information to enable them to prepare the dissertation and will advise them of the specific requirements and submission deadlines that apply e.g. in student handbooks, specific dissertation handbooks or online versions. In addition, students are expected to attend dissertation workshops/seminars, dissertation units and/or specific sessions with their dissertation supervisor. Students should also have access to good examples of previous Master’s dissertations or dissertation templates while preparing the dissertation.

Students must ensure that their dissertation is their own work and, therefore, identify any material which is not their own work by referencing and acknowledgement. The dissertation must NOT incorporate dissertation material which has been used for another degree or plagiarise the work of others.

PRESENTATION

Number of copies

Two printed or typed copies of the dissertation must be submitted for examination (see Submission below).

Binding

The dissertation should be presented in a secure, temporary binding, with a glued or spiral spine. Examples of temporary binding include ‘perfect binding’ and ‘spring-back binding’. The University’s Print Services can provide this service as well as commercial firms which are familiar with University dissertation practices. Information may be obtained from the relevant School Office.

Preliminary pages

The first five preliminary pages must be single-sided and include: a Title Page, Abstract, Dedication and Acknowledgements (if applicable), Author’s Declaration and Table of Contents.

Title page

At the top of the title page, the dissertation should give the title and, if necessary, the sub-title. The full name of the dissertation author should be in the centre of the page. At the bottom centre should be the following words:

“A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of …(title) by advanced study in ...(programme title) in the Faculty of ...(Faculty name)”. Under this text, the name of the School and the date that the dissertation was submitted should be provided. The word count should be shown on the title page.

Abstract

Each dissertation 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 of 10 – 12.
Dedication and acknowledgements are at the discretion of the student writing the dissertation.

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 Taught Postgraduate Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, this work is my own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of others, is indicated as such. I have identified all material in this dissertation which is not my own work through appropriate referencing and acknowledgement. Where I have quoted from the work of others, I have included the source in the references/bibliography. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: …………………………………………………………….   DATE: ……………..
(Signature of student/candidate)

Table of contents, list of tables and illustrative material

The table of contents must list, in sequence and with page numbers, all chapters, sections and sub-sections, the list of references; as well as abbreviations and appendices (if permitted). The list of tables and illustrations should follow the table of contents, listing with page numbers the tables, photographs, diagrams in the order in which they appear in the text.

Further information on the layout of dissertations may be found in British Standard Recommendations on the presentation of dissertations, available in the Arts & Social Sciences Library, Tyndall Avenue and in the Examinations Office.

Sequence

Dissertation material should be organised as follows:

Title Page
Abstract
Dedication and Acknowledgements (if applicable)
Author’s Declaration
Table of Contents, Tables and Illustrative Material
Text – chapters, sections and sub-divisions
Appendices – (if any, including media)
List of references/Bibliography

Word length

A standard dissertation will normally have a maximum word count of between 10,000 – 15,000 words. A dissertation based on laboratory work may have a maximum word count of between 6,000 – 10,000 words. References and lists of contents pages can be additional to the word limit, as can be appendices (although these should be reasonable in length). A word count should be shown on the Title Page. Unnecessary length in the dissertation may be to the student’s disadvantage and the maximum number of words permitted must not be exceeded.

Paper

The dissertation must be printed on A4 (210mm x 297mm) white paper. A3 paper may be used for maps, plans, diagrams and illustrative material. Pages should normally be double-sided (except the preliminary 5 pages which must be single-sided).

Page numbering

The pages should be numbered consecutively at the bottom centre of the page (i.e. the title page is page 1), including appendices.
Text
Text should be in double or 1.5 line spacing, and the font size should be chosen to ensure clarity and legibility for the main text and any quotations and footnotes e.g. 12pt. Margins should allow for binding so should not be less than 40mm at the binding left hand side and the top, bottom and side margins should not be less than 15mm.

Digital recording media, photocopies and photographs
Appendices may include digital recording media in standard formats and good quality photocopies and photographs as long as such material constitutes the most appropriate method of presenting the information. This material should be clearly labelled and listed in the dissertation’s list of illustrative material. Material must not infringe copyright regulations.

SUBMISSION
Students should submit two copies of the dissertation to the School Office, together with the signed submission form by the required deadline date and time. In many schools, the dissertation must be submitted by 12.00 on the deadline date.

Penalties for late submission of the dissertation apply. Details are outlined in the section 9 of the Regulations and Code of Practice.

Dissertations must be submitted in accordance with the programme’s requirements and published University deadline dates for submission:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student mode of attendance</th>
<th>Dissertation submission deadline date</th>
<th>Degree Congregation date (when degree conferred if successful)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time</td>
<td>15 September</td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>15 September</td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time variable</td>
<td>Normally by the maximum study date.</td>
<td>July/February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full details are contained in school handbooks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. Dissertation submission deadline dates for some part-time and professional programmes may differ from the above deadlines, but they must be clearly stated in school handbooks and enable timely student graduation.

Two printed or typed copies of the dissertation must be submitted to the relevant School Office for examination. One copy will normally be securely stored in the School, in line with data protection guidelines.

Students should retain an additional copy of the dissertation in case they are called for an oral examination.

In some Schools, students must also submit an electronic copy of their dissertation via Blackboard or via email to the School Office. Electronic submission of the dissertation enables examiners to check submitted dissertations for plagiarism using plagiarism detection software.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, students must submit their dissertation within the normal study period for the award.
DISSEETATION EXAMINATION

Dissertations are assessed by two internal examiners (at least one of whom is not the dissertation supervisor). Borderline decisions or where there is disagreement between markers may be referred to the external examiner. An Examiner’s Report Form is used to give feedback on the dissertation and a final mark. Details are contained in school handbooks.

Official notification of the examination result is sent to students following the relevant Board of Examiners.
INDUCTION PROGRAMME – AN EXAMPLE

School induction events are designed to orientate students for postgraduate study and will vary according to the discipline and student cohort. However, induction events may include a number of the following features:

- **A welcome and introduction to the school/subject.**
- **Meetings with key school staff** e.g. Programme Director, Personal Tutor, unit directors, administrative staff, Director of Graduate Studies (if applicable), Head of School.
- Information on language support (*international students*), student counselling, personal tutoring, disability and pastoral support arrangements.
- **Information and training on health and safety, security protocols and use of equipment** (where applicable).
- **An overview session on the programme** with a question and answer session.
- **A tour of the School.**
- **A tour of the library**
- **A scheduled one to one meeting with the Personal Tutor.**
- **Computing facilities and IT skills training.**
- **A session on study skills.** Topics may include: how to carry out research and to use internet and library resources effectively, how to write an academic essay or report, how to quote correctly from a direct source using quotation marks, how to reference an assignment and decide which system to use (e.g. Harvard), how to time manage effectively and manage work/life balance (for part-time students) and how to develop critical analysis skills.
- **Information on how the school detects plagiarism and cheating** and the University procedures for dealing with plagiarism and cheating cases.
- **A social meeting for students,** e.g. during the lunchtime.

**In addition, for international students:**

- A meeting with staff from the International Student Advisory Team to discuss immigration and student visa issues, and progress monitoring.
- A meeting with Language Centre staff.
- A meeting with staff from the Bristol International Students’ Centre (BISC)
- The English Education System.

Students should also have an opportunity to tour the University precinct and visit the Students’ Union during induction.

**Source – Graduate School of Education, 2008**
Admissions Principles and Procedures for Postgraduate Taught Programmes

1 Aims

1.1 The University’s postgraduate students have lively, enquiring minds and a fascination for their subject. The University’s postgraduate admissions processes are intended to identify the most talented and able students worldwide.

1.2 The University of Bristol aims to:

- Maintain the high academic standards for which it is known.
- Create a student body that is balanced and diverse in terms of background and experience, with all the educational and cultural benefits that this brings.
- Recruit students who will engage with and contribute to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the University community.

1.3 The University will achieve these aims by:

- Encouraging applications from all those with the motivation and academic ability to thrive at Bristol, whatever their background or country of origin.
- Assessing each application carefully and fairly.
- Offering places to suitably qualified applicants who have the potential to succeed at Bristol.

1.4 The Admissions Principles and Procedures through which the University assesses applications and offers places are designed to be:

- Easily understood by candidates.
- Transparent.
- Fair.
- Appropriate to the needs of the discipline.
- Based on principles that are consistently applied across the University.

1.5 The University will review its Admissions Principles and Procedures annually in the light of experience, research and best practice.

2 Monitoring of Admissions

2.1 Under Statute 21 of the University, Senate regulates the admission of students, subject to the Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations.

2.2 The Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation Strategy Group (ARWP) is tasked with ensuring that key policies and procedures relating to the recruitment and admission of all students are consistent with each other. The Group is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) and includes a member of academic staff representing each of the three sub-groups, and from three different Faculties, the Academic Registrar, the Director of Student
Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes 2010/11
Recruitment, Access and Admissions, the Head of the International Office
and the Vice-President (Education) of the Students’ Union.

2.3 ARWP has three working groups including a Postgraduate Admissions Group (PGAG), which reports both to ARWP and to the University Graduate Studies Committee (UGSC). PGAG is responsible for much of the detailed policy development and monitoring work, liaising with the Graduate Education Directors and the postgraduate admissions practitioner community to produce recommendations for action.

2.4 In relation to postgraduate study the Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation Strategy Group is responsible for:

- Overseeing the development and implementation of the University’s strategy for the recruitment and admission of students.
- Reviewing the Admissions Principles and Procedures on an annual basis, to ensure they enable the University to achieve its aims and are consistent with its policies.
- Ensuring that the Admissions Principles and Procedures are implemented.
- Approving departmental practice to ensure it is in line with the Admissions Principles and Procedures and consistent across the University.
- Ensuring that University policies and strategies remain consistent with each other and enable the University to achieve its strategic objectives for the recruitment and admission of students.
- Assessing the impact of external trends and internal developments including university student funding matters on student recruitment (including widening participation) and admissions.
- Spreading good practice and encouraging consistency.
- Advising Departments on how best to achieve the University’s Admissions Aims.

2.5 ARWP reports to Education Committee and makes an annual report to Senate. In order to respond to rapidly changing circumstances, the Chair is empowered to act on behalf of the Committee between meetings.

2.6 The University Graduate Studies Committee (UGSC) is a subcommittee of the Education Committee. Membership includes the Graduate Education Director from each Faculty (one of whom acts as Chair), the Director of the Education Support Unit, the Academic Registrar, and a representative from the Faculty Heads of Academic Administration. The role of the UGSC is to advise the Education Committee on the development of policy on graduate studies across the whole University and on matters referred to it by the Education Committee.

3 Consistency

3.1 All Faculties and Schools must act in a way consistent with the University’s Admissions Aims (see section 1.2) and must follow the principles and procedures set out in this document.

3.2 The Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation Strategy Group—will require an Admissions Statement for each programme or group of programmes admitting postgraduate taught students, providing details of the entry requirements and local procedures which will be followed for all programmes of study, in line with the University’s Admissions Principles and Procedures.
3.3 Each faculty or school (as appropriate) will use its statement(s) to seek approval from the Group for the proposed method by which they will admit students. The Postgraduate Admissions Group will approve individual Admissions Statements, on behalf of the Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation Strategy Group. For monitoring purposes, the Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation Strategy Group will consider a sample of approved statements on an annual basis.

3.4 Admissions Statements will include:

- The method by which they will support the principles and implement the procedures set out in this document.
- Criteria against which they will assess applicants.
- An indication of whether criteria will be weighted differently in the assessment of applicants.
- The process for considering applications and assessing candidates.

3.5 Admissions Statements will be accessible on the University’s website.

3.6 The Postgraduate Recruitment and Admissions Office will develop web-based support materials for those engaged in admission to postgraduate taught programmes. The office will also keep an up to date list of postgraduate admissions tutors for communications purposes, and provide training and access to up-to-date information on changes in legislation, qualifications and other contextual information as well as University policy and practice by means of regular meetings of a Postgraduate Admissions Forum. The aim will be to ensure that any training is relevant to the needs of those admitting to postgraduate taught programmes and focused on helping them to do their job effectively. Training providers will include staff with professional expertise in the relevant areas of legislation and policy as well as experienced postgraduate admissions tutors.

4 Responsibilities

4.1. Faculties, and in particular the Graduate Education Directors, are ultimately responsible to the University for the admission of their postgraduate students, and must ensure that processes are in place to handle enquires and applications and to admit students, in accordance with the University’s Admissions Principles and Procedures.

4.2. Control over entry to any programme remains with faculties, acting on the advice of schools/departments in the evaluation and acceptance of student transfers and accreditation of prior learning. Control over entry to a particular unit and programme transfers within a school or department remains with the relevant school/department.

4.3. The University deadline for postgraduate applications is 1 August preceding the commencement of the programme. Schools/departments may, subject to Faculty approval, specify a programme-specific closing date for applications but may only do so if this is published in their Admissions Statement, in the prospectus and on the University website.

4.4. Key staff who are responsible for admissions are listed below:

- Graduate Education Directors take an overview of postgraduate admissions at faculty level, either approving any offer made outside normal entry requirements (e.g. Accredited Prior Learning applications) or, in some faculties, signing admissions letters and approving offers.
Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Postgraduate Programmes 2010/11

where this is not delegated to the Faculty Head of Academic Administration.

- **Faculty Offices** oversee the processing of postgraduate applications. They are responsible for issuing formal decisions to applicants and processing applicant decisions, monitoring admissions and sending out registration information. In two faculties, some of this responsibility is devolved to specific large schools or a Graduate School.

- **The Head of Department or School** is normally responsible for the integrity of the admissions processes in his/her department or school. He/she will appoint admissions selectors, such as programme directors or postgraduate admissions tutors, and ensure they have time to take advantage of admissions training opportunities, and have sufficient resources to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

- **Admissions selectors for taught programmes**, e.g. programme directors, postgraduate admissions tutors or an admissions team, normally report to their head of department or school and are expected to work closely with relevant University admissions staff. There should be an annual review of admissions criteria and associated processes by the relevant academic staff in each School/Department.

- **The Postgraduate Recruitment and Admissions Office** is responsible for co-ordinating and sharing good practice in the recruitment and admission of postgraduate students. Where appropriate, it provides support to postgraduate admissions practitioners in their work. The office also works with, the International Office (e.g. the International Recruitment Team who advise on qualifications equivalence) and relevant committees to develop the policy framework within which postgraduate admissions takes place.

5 Application Process

5.1 With the exception of PGCE applications (which are made through the Graduate Teacher Training Registry) and applications for the MSc in Social Work (which can be made through UCAS), applications for all programmes should be made using the University’s standard form (either online or paper) in accordance with the procedure described in the prospectus and on the website. The University reserves the right not to consider incomplete applications. Submission of incomplete applications can lead to delays in processing.

5.2 While there is no university-wide charge to applicants for consideration of their applications, individual departments may, if they wish, introduce their own charge. In such cases, departments are expected to ensure that details of the amount payable and mechanism for payment are published in their Admissions Statement, in the prospectus and on the university website.

5.3 Self-funded international students applying for taught programmes are required to pay a minimum compulsory deposit of £1,000 but may pay up to the full cost of the tuition fee for the first year. The payment of a deposit is likely to ease their application for a visa. Students whose fees are being paid by an external organisation or sponsor (for example, a government department, or recognised charity) are not required to pay a deposit. The deposit can be paid online at [http://bris.ac.uk/online-payments/deposits](http://bris.ac.uk/online-payments/deposits). The deposit is non-transferable and non-refundable except under the circumstances outlined in the International Deposits Refund Policy which is available at [http://www.bris.ac.uk/academicregistry/office/policies/idrp.html](http://www.bris.ac.uk/academicregistry/office/policies/idrp.html)
5.4 Where an additional programme-specific deposit is required by way of acceptance of an offer, departments must make this, and the mechanism for making payments, clear in their Admissions Statement, in the prospectus and on the university website.

5.5 Competition for funding for postgraduate study is fierce, and funding is often tied to a sponsor’s conditions. In some cases, this may impact on the decision to accept an application. Where there is a possibility of this occurring, this must also be explained in the Admissions Statement.

6 Selection and Admission

Entry requirements

6.1 Applicants to postgraduate programmes are normally expected to have good higher education qualifications, and entry requirements are specified at programme level.

6.2 The University’s minimum requirements for entry to taught postgraduate programmes are a first degree, normally at UK Honours Upper Second (2:1) level or equivalent, OR evidence of prior learning, relevant professional work experience, or academic achievement that enables the University to assess the candidate’s potential to succeed in the programme applied for. Applicants with a lower Second level (2:2) Honours degree may only be admitted to specific programmes (detailed in the Prospectus) where there is clear evidence of academic potential at taught postgraduate level. Applicants whose first language is not English are also required to satisfy the University’s English language entry requirements policy. Faculties, schools and departments should encourage students to attend English language courses as appropriate, either before their programme begins (if the IELTS score is lower than required before admission), or at the start of the programme.

6.3 Acceptance of Accredited Prior (Experiential/Certified) Learning (AP(E/C)L) credit will be in line with the University’s guidance at: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/facultyadvice/policy/aplguidelines.html

All cases will require prior approval by the Programme Director and Graduate Education Director. The maximum credit for which Accredited Prior Learning can be accepted is one third of a programme, i.e. 60 credit points APL for a 180 credit point Master’s programme.

6.4 Professional programmes which lead to a recognised professional qualification may require a specific professional qualification and a number of years of relevant professional experience prior to admission, e.g. “an Education degree plus one year of post-professional experience”; “a qualified medical degree and, in addition, 2-3 years experience and evidence of interest in Continuing Professional Development in the subject”.

Selection

6.5 The University recognises the diversity of educational backgrounds from which its future students come. There are many ways of demonstrating the academic promise and ability to benefit from study and it is recognised that educational systems and choices vary extensively worldwide.

6.6 Postgraduate Admissions Tutors must ensure that their programmes have explicit criteria by which applications are judged, which support the
6.7. These criteria could be articulated at programme, department, school or faculty level, to meet local preferences and needs. Criteria should include elements that allow the following judgments to be made:

- The academic preparedness and potential of the applicant.
- The applicant’s ability to benefit from study at the University of Bristol, including any professional judgments or restrictions, or any fitness to practise issues.
- The applicant’s ability to contribute effectively to other activities of the Department, where required.
- The Department’s ability to provide a study place or suitable supervision.

6.8. The University upholds the principles of equality and diversity, respect and dignity. Candidates are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion or belief, disability, health or age.

6.9. The University’s core requirements in respect of admissions decisions on formal applications for taught postgraduate programmes are set out below.

6.10. All applications are considered by at least two members of the appropriate admissions team, and in the majority of cases one will be an academic member of staff.

6.11. Admissions decisions will take into account the completed application form, two academic references, and the verified degree transcript. Admissions staff will be aware of University admissions guidance such as the Admissions Principles and Procedures for Postgraduate Taught Programmes and Guidelines on the Accreditation of Prior Learning. The reasons for an admission decision will be recorded for all applications.

6.12. Admissions staff will assess the academic potential of individual candidates and take into consideration the University’s Admissions Principles and Procedures and programme entry requirements. Selectors must ensure that all admissions decisions take account of equality and diversity policy and are based on fair and justifiable criteria.

6.13. Consideration of applications from students who declare a disability is based on the same criteria and principles as for other candidates. The University is seeking to reduce any barriers that might confront a student with a disability seeking to study at Bristol. A decision may need to take into account any overriding health and safety concerns, barriers relating to professional requirements, or the University’s ability or inability to make any necessary reasonable adjustments. Such cases will be addressed on an individual basis. Implementation of the Admissions Principles and Procedures will be sensitive to the different experiences of disabled applicants, and will take into account their response to the opportunities and challenges they have encountered, on the understanding that these may be individual to the applicant. Applicants with a disability are encouraged to disclose this to the University, to enable any necessary reasonable adjustments to be planned in support of their education. Failure to do so may impact on the ability to make any necessary reasonable adjustments.

6.14. Admissions staff will disregard any criminal convictions that are spent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, unless the programme
of study is likely to bring the student into contact with children or vulnerable adults. Where this is the case, a disclosure will be sought through the Criminal Records Bureau. Where an applicant has an unspent (or spent in relevant cases) conviction, a decision on whether to offer a place will be made by a group convened by the Academic Registrar according to the procedure set out in our procedures for the recruitment of students who are ex-offenders.

6.15. In order to avoid the proliferation of potentially dangerous technologies in unstable or unfriendly regimes, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) runs an Academic Technology Approval Scheme. This scheme is compulsory for overseas applicants from outside the EU and approval by the FCO under the terms of the scheme is a requirement for entry to a number of programmes.

6.16. The University of Bristol is not prepared to admit applications on the strength of information believed to be either fraudulent or plagiarised, and reserves the right to reject or cancel an application under these circumstances, as outlined in the University statement of policy on fraudulent applications.

6.17. The University reserves the right to exclude a candidate who is considered on justifiable grounds to be unsuitable for a place on a particular course or for attendance at the University.

Interviews

6.18. In general, the University does not require candidates to be interviewed. Schools/ departments may interview candidates, subject to clearly explaining why and how the interview will be used in assessing the candidates, and to following University-approved procedures. These are:

i. All candidates must be treated on an equal and fair basis.
ii. Interviews intended to select students must normally be conducted by at least two people, including a member of staff who has undergone University-provided training on fair and effective recruitment techniques.
iii. The interview and consequent decision-making will be consistent with the University's policy on equal opportunities. Questions related to the race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion or age of the applicant must not be raised either at the interview or in subsequent discussion. However, staff should encourage applicants to disclose any disability to the University, to help ensure that any necessary adjustments can be planned to support their education.
iv. Criteria for measuring a candidate's performance must be specified in the Admissions Statement.
v. A standard format note of the interview must be taken and submitted to the Admissions Tutor.
vi. Where appropriate, telephone interviews by conference call may be conducted.

Additional material

6.19. The University does not normally require applicants to provide supplementary written work for admission. However, departments may ask applicants for an example of their work, or set them a written task, subject to explaining clearly why and how this will be used in assessing the candidate. For example, applicants may be asked to provide a creative piece of work or a critical essay on a specific topic where additional professional or other vocational selection criteria exist.
7. Offers

7.1 Wherever possible, applicants to PG taught programmes will receive a decision within 21 calendar days of submitting a complete application.

7.2 Faculty Offices\(^2\) normally make formal offers on behalf of the University. Offers may be made with or without conditions attached. The levels of conditional offers made must normally be in line with published entry requirements and may not vary substantially from these.

7.3. All offers, including unconditional offers are made in good faith, and the University reserves the right to withdraw an offer on justifiable grounds.

7.4. In determining the number of offers to be made, Admissions Tutors must take account of the student number targets agreed by the University Planning and Resources Committee on an annual basis.

8. Acceptance and Confirmation

8.1. Applicants are required to confirm their acceptance of an offer within 40 days of the date of the offer being made. The University does not guarantee to hold open places for offer-holders who have not confirmed their acceptance.

8.2. Where a conditional offer is made applicants are expected to provide the University with evidence that any offer conditions have been met. The Admissions Statement should make clear the timeframe in which applicants are expected to provide evidence that conditions have been met. The Admissions Statement should also make clear if it is possible for candidates to apply for deferred entry to a programme.

8.3. International applicants should indicate whether they require the University to act as a sponsor for the purposes of a visa application.

8.4. The University has contingency plans in place to enable it to cope with failure of these processes (for example, localised computer systems failure) or in the event of candidates being unable to satisfy their offer conditions because the outcomes of previous qualifications have been delayed by strike action, by natural disasters or similar unforeseen circumstances beyond the applicant’s control. However, depending on the timescale, the amount of information available and availability of places, it might be necessary to offer a place for the following academic year (i.e. deferred entry).

9. Applicants to whom an offer is not made

9.1. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing. The reasons for an admission decision should be recorded for every application.

9.2. Due to the volume of applications received by the University, we regret that it is not possible for us to enter into correspondence with unsuccessful applicants.

9.3. The University will correspond about a decision only with the candidate, unless the candidate provides written permission for the University to discuss it with another person. There is no right of appeal and the decision will not be reviewed. However, concerns that the University’s Admissions Principles and Procedures have been incorrectly implemented may be investigated under the Applicant Feedback and Complaints Procedures.

\(^2\) Or Graduate Schools or Schools as approved by the Faculty.