

University of Bristol

Policy on Joint and Dual Doctoral Awards

Introduction

1. Definitions

- a. A **joint doctoral award** is one which leads to a single award for a research degree programme which is jointly offered by the partner institutions. The single award certificate will be endorsed by all partners.
 - b. A **dual doctoral award** is one which leads to separate awards from two partner institutions involved in a joint research degree programme. Each award certificate will refer to the joint programme.
2. The University permits joint or dual doctoral awards **only** when the criteria specified in sections 5-9 are satisfied.
 3. All prospective partners must be made aware of this policy at the outset of any negotiations, and clear agreement reached at an early stage on whether the proposal is for a joint or dual award, as defined in section 1 of this policy. The University of Bristol permits both types.
 4. This policy should be read and implemented in conjunction with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, with particular reference to *Chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others* and *Chapter B11: Research degrees*.

Criteria for setting up joint or dual doctoral awards

5. The University will normally only consider proposals for joint or dual doctoral awards where the proposed partners are leading research universities, although an exception may be made if the proposal involves an externally-funded Doctoral Training Centre/Partnership where there is a compelling strategic reason for partnering with a variety of universities.
6. The proposed research programme must be in an area of disciplinary excellence or build on a strong established research link.
7. A proposal for a joint or dual doctoral award must have the full support of the relevant faculty or faculties, and be able to demonstrate that it meets at least 2 of the following criteria:
 - a. It offers long-term strategic benefits for the University (for example, increased student recruitment, increased income, access to new sources of funding, opportunities for academic exchange);
 - b. It will help to raise the University's global brand and reputation;
 - c. It will deepen an existing research relationship and has the potential to involve more than one discipline;
 - d. It involves cohorts of students rather than a single individual.
8. For all joint and dual awards, there must be a written agreement between the University of Bristol and the other degree-awarding institution(s) involved in the joint programme, which confirms that partner institutions have the legal right and capacity to make joint or dual awards and sets out, *inter alia*:
 - a. the nature of the doctoral programme;
 - b. the award(s) that will be made on successful completion of the programme;
 - c. the arrangements for registration of the students and the fees payable to each party;
 - d. the arrangements for academic supervision and assessment at both/all partner institutions.
9. Where relevant, the University must be satisfied that any national expectations for the academic standards of doctoral awards and the training of research students are met by the proposed partner, and that any professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) requirements are taken into account.

Procedure for the approval of joint or dual doctoral awards

10. If the proposal for a joint or dual award forms part of a bid for an externally-funded Doctoral Training Centre/Partnership, this aspect will be handled by the Academic Registry as part of the bid process.
11. In all other cases, the proposer should do the following:
 - a. Contact the Academic Registry for initial advice about the approval process and the regulatory framework;
 - b. Where appropriate, also contact the International Office for advice on the standing of a prospective overseas partner;
 - c. Prepare their case for approval, using the guidance and template provided by the Academic Registry and including a statement of support from the relevant Dean or Deans;
 - d. Submit their case for approval to the Academic Director of Graduate Studies (ADGS).
12. The ADGS will review the proposal and will make a recommendation to the PVC (Education & Students). *Proposals initiated by another institution will be subject to particularly careful scrutiny to ensure that the arrangement meets the University of Bristol criteria and is legal for all partners.*
13. If approved, the Academic Registry will draw up the appropriate agreements in consultation with the Secretary's Office and the partner institution(s).
14. All approvals of joint or dual awards and the subsequent sign-off of any agreements will be reported to Education Committee.

Approved by Senate, 17 June 2013.