Faculty of Social Sciences & Law

Postgraduate Student Handbook for Taught Students

2020/21
This Handbook relates to the session 2020/21 and does not commit the University in respect of subsequent sessions.

You are advised to keep this handbook during your postgraduate studies for your information.

Please also the University Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes:
http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html
Welcome from the Dean

I am delighted to welcome you to the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law!

At Bristol, you will be a member of one of the most talented social sciences and law student bodies in the country, reflected in our South West Doctoral Training Partnership, which is not only accredited by the Economics and Social Research Council (ESRC) but has the largest allocation of funded places in the country. You will also be studying in one of England’s most beautiful and culturally vibrant cities and be advised by scholars with national and international reputations in their specialist research fields. The programmes in the Faculty have been carefully designed to provide a stimulating experience. We hope that you find that your period of study here intellectually challenging, rewarding, and exciting.

I wish you an enjoyable and successful time here.

Professor Simon Tormey,
Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law

Key Dates

Introductory Week (week zero): 28 September – 2 October 2020
Teaching Block 1: 5 October 2020 – 15 January 2021
January Assessment Period: 18 – 29 January 2021
Teaching Block 2: 1 February – 14 May 2021
Summer Assessment Period: 24 May – 14 June 2021

Vacation Dates

Christmas Vacation: 21 December 2020 – 8 January 2021
Easter Vacation: 29 March – 16 April 2021

University closure dates can be found at www.bristol.ac.uk/university/dates/
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Introduction

This Handbook provides basic information relevant to your studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law. You will receive school and/or programme handbooks at School induction, which contain more specific information on your programme, assessment methods and other general information. Schools may also provide information on their local website or via the virtual learning environment Blackboard (www.ole.bris.ac.uk)

The Faculty of Social Sciences and Law consists of eight Schools:

• School of Economics
• School of Accounting and Finance
• School of Management
• School of Education
• School of Geographical Sciences (Human Geography only)
• University of Bristol Law School
• School for Policy Studies
• School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies

Links to School websites can be found at http://www.bris.ac.uk/fssl/about/schools/

For information relating to the Library (www.bristol.ac.uk/library) or IT Services (www.bristol.ac.uk/it-services), please consult their individual websites.

All programmes of study are governed by the University’s Regulations and Code of Practices

The Taught Regulations and Code of Practice: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html.
The Faculty

The Faculty of Social Sciences and Law is run by several Faculty Officers and Teams. Below are the Officers and Teams which are directly relevant to your study as Postgraduate Taught students:

The Dean

The Dean is the highest academic authority in the Faculty and oversees the Faculty budget, and research and education planning. They chair the Faculty Board and represents the Faculty on all high-level University committees, such as University Planning and Resources Committee, Senate and Council.

Faculty Education Manager

The Faculty Education Manager is responsible for managing the Faculty Education Team and overseeing the student and education processes across the Faculty. This includes registration, timetabling, progress and student record administration, student casework and the provision of advice and information on education procedures.

Faculty Education Director (PGT)

The Faculty Education Director (PGT) is responsible for all postgraduate Taught Masters matters in the Faculty, including overseeing student progress, final examination results, approving suspensions and extensions and advising the Dean on education strategy. They chair the Faculty’s Graduate Studies Committee (PGT), Examination Board (Postgraduate) and represent the Faculty at relevant University Committees including the University’s Graduate Studies (PGT) Committee.

Faculty Manager

The Faculty Manager is responsible for effective operations support for the delivery of the Faculty academic vision and strategy, with particular responsibility for project initiation and delivery. They oversee Faculty-level administrative and operational processes and have responsibility for budgets and resources.

Faculty Education Team

The Faculty Education Team located on the 1st Floor of 2 Priory Road. They are the central point of information for the Faculty and deal with student progress administration, education processes, policies and committees. The Team produce official documents for students (e.g. Certification Letters, Bank Letters and Council Tax Forms).

South West Doctoral Training Partnership

The South West Doctoral Training Partnership (SWDTP) is accredited by the ESRC to provide postgraduate research training in the social sciences. The Partnership includes the Universities of Bristol, Exeter, Bath, Plymouth and UWE. It draws together the established research excellence of around 800 academic and research staff at the five institutions.

For more information about the SWDTP, visit their website at: www.swdtp.ac.uk.

The Faculty Education Team office is open Monday to Friday from 10 am until 4 pm.
(Times may vary in Vacation periods and will be closed on University closure days)

Please note due to the COVID pandemic, the Faculty Office is currently working remotely and only contactable by email.
## Faculty Contact details

### Faculty Officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Dean</td>
<td>Professor Simon Tormey</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dean-fssl@bristol.ac.uk">dean-fssl@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Manager</td>
<td>Dominic Freda</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dominic.freda@bristol.ac.uk">dominic.freda@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Research Director</td>
<td>Professor Deborah Wilson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:D.Wilson@bristol.ac.uk">D.Wilson@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty PGR Director</td>
<td>Professor Jutta Weldes</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Jutta.Weldes@bristol.ac.uk">Jutta.Weldes@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Education Director  (PGT)</td>
<td>Dr Humphrey Bourne</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Humphrey.Bourne@bristol.ac.uk">Humphrey.Bourne@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Education Director  (UG)</td>
<td>Dr Rachel Lart</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Rachel.Lart@bristol.ac.uk">Rachel.Lart@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
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### Faculty Education Team

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Education Manager</td>
<td>Katie Allan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:katie.allan@bristol.ac.uk">katie.allan@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting Faculty Education Manager</td>
<td>Suzanne Jenkin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s.jenkin@bristol.ac.uk">s.jenkin@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Administration Manager</td>
<td>Anna Wallace</td>
<td><a href="mailto:anna.wallace@bristol.ac.uk">anna.wallace@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Education Administrator (PGR)</td>
<td>Molly Wedge</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fssl-pgr@bristol.ac.uk">fssl-pgr@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Education Administrator (PGT)</td>
<td>Daniela Dyson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fssl-pgadmin@bristol.ac.uk">fssl-pgadmin@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Education Administrator (UG)</td>
<td>Charley Hughes</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fssl-ugadmin@bristol.ac.uk">fssl-ugadmin@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>David Morgan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fssl-transcripts@bristol.ac.uk">fssl-transcripts@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Timetabling Officer</td>
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### South West Doctoral Training Partnership (SWDTP)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director (Interim)</td>
<td>Prof Rich Harris</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Rich.harris@bristol.ac.uk">Rich.harris@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Director (Interim)</td>
<td>Dr Angeline Mbogo Barrett</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Angeline.barrett@bristol.ac.uk">Angeline.barrett@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Sonja Foster</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sonja.foster@bristol.ac.uk">sonja.foster@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration Facilitator</td>
<td>Dr Molly Conisbee</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Molly.conisbee@bristol.ac.uk">Molly.conisbee@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Joanna Williams</td>
<td><a href="mailto:joanna.williams@bristol.ac.uk">joanna.williams@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Helen Stanton</td>
<td><a href="mailto:swdtp-enquiries@bristol.ac.uk">swdtp-enquiries@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Professional Liaison Network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Liaison Manager</td>
<td>Alexander Paterson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:al.paterson@bristol.ac.uk">al.paterson@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Liaison Officer (Interim)</td>
<td>Tracey Maggs</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tracey.maggs@bristol.ac.uk">tracey.maggs@bristol.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Faculty Committees

There are several decision-making Committees within the Faculty, which mirror University Committees.

**Faculty Board**

The highest decision-making body within the Faculty and is responsible for overseeing all major Faculty academic decisions and priorities. It ratifies reports and recommendations of policy from individual Faculty committees and discusses policy and items referred by the Senate.

**Faculty Examination Board (Postgraduate)**

This board formally approves all final examination results for taught programmes and ensures there is consistent treatment of extenuating circumstances and plagiarism/cheating penalties for students within the Faculty. It also monitors student progress, students on suspension and extension of study, and withdrawals.

**Faculty Graduate Studies PGT Committee**

These committees consider academic policy within a quality assurance context and it oversees the new and revised programme and unit proposals. They are also responsible for high-quality postgraduate teaching provision in the Faculty. They advise the Faculty Board on all aspects of postgraduate teaching and postgraduate research policy.

**Faculty Student-Staff Liaison Committee**

This committee is chaired by the Faculty postgraduate student representatives and meets three times a year. Membership of the committee is two student representatives from each School and the Faculty Education Director (PGT) and Faculty PGR Director. The purpose of the committee is to discuss academic and pastoral matters that affect students.

**Student Representation**

We encourage students to take an active role within the Faculty by becoming student representatives. The Students’ Union organises elections for representatives at School level and Faculty level and it also runs training sessions for representatives. These representatives attend the relevant Faculty committees as appropriate and the Student-Staff Liaison Committee.

**Postgraduate Network** - [https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/groups/bristol-su-postgraduate-network](https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/groups/bristol-su-postgraduate-network)

The PG Network is a student-led initiative for all postgraduate students that seeks to develop an active, strong and vibrant postgraduate community here at Bristol.

The PG Network provides a real chance for students to together shape and develop Bristol’s postgraduate community life. Its cohesive and supportive nature inspires postgraduate students to get involved in organising and attending social events and provides a platform through which students can effectively feed into and influence the decision-making and priority-setting of Bristol SU and the University of Bristol.

If you would like further information about events, opportunities or ideas that you may have please contact Students’ Union staff at bristolsu@bristol.ac.uk
Official Documents

The Faculty Office can produce official documents including Certification Letters (confirmation of student status), Bank Letters (to open a bank account), Council Tax Certificates (for full-time students applying for Council Tax reduction/exemption) and Transcripts.

These documents can be requested through the Faculty of Social Sciences Online Shop at: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/fssl/official-documents/

Please note the following when ordering documents:

- Documents take 1-3 working days to produce, from receipt of the order through the Online Shop. Transcripts can take up to 10 working days. During peak periods some requests may take longer to process.
- You can only order documents for yourself, you cannot order documents on behalf of someone else.
- When collecting documents in person, you must present your UCard.
- Documents are normally only available in hard copy.
- For Bank Letters, students in non-University of Bristol accommodation will be required to present evidence of tenancy, such as a contract or other proof of address.

If you have any queries about Official Documents, please email transcripts-fssl@bristol.ac.uk.

Council Tax Exemption Criteria

- Council Tax exemption starts on the start date of your programme of study and continues until you have completed your programme or submitted your dissertation. You might be liable for Council Tax outside of those periods (e.g., if you rent a property before the start of the programme of study or remain in the property after your submission date).

- Students can only claim Council Tax exemption/reduction if their programme of study meets the definition of "full-time". Most part-time, visiting or occasional students are not eligible for Council Tax exemption.

- The University provides Bristol City Council with listings of all full-time students (undergraduate and postgraduate) three times a year, in early November, January and May. Therefore, it might not be necessary to request a Council Tax Certificate.

- Students that live in Halls of Residence or University-owned student houses do not need a Council Tax Certificate.

More information on Council Tax regulations can be found on the University website at: www.bristol.ac.uk/currentstudents/.

Application forms for exemption are available on the Bristol City Council website: https://www.bristol.gov.uk/council-tax/student-exemptions-and-discounts (or, for those living outside the Bristol area, from their local authority).
Registration, Status and Fees

Annual Registration
All students MUST register at the beginning of each academic year (normally in September) throughout their studies.

Registration can be completed via StudentInfo (www.bris.ac.uk/studentinfo/).

Failure to register online may mean that students are no longer able to access the library, computing or other facilities and may lead to their withdrawal from their studies.

Change in Personal Details
The University communicates with you using the contact details held on our student record system. Therefore, we must have your correct contact and personal details throughout your studies.

You can check and update your personal details online via StudentInfo (www.bris.ac.uk/studentinfo/).

Fee Obligations
Students must pay tuition fees during their studies.

You can make payments or set up future recurring payments in the Fees and Funding channel in your MyBristol portal: www.bristol.ac.uk/mybristol/. Information on other payment options is available from the Fees and Funding website: www.bristol.ac.uk/fees-funding/.

Students who are in debt to the University will need to resolve their debt with the Income Office or they may no longer be able to access the library, computing or other facilities during their studies. Student debtors will be subject to the University’s Student Fees Policy: www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/studentfees.html

A fee may be applicable if students exceed their submission deadline. For more details see: www.bristol.ac.uk/fees-funding/.

Suspension of Study
A suspension is an approved interruption of a student's study period. A suspension may be granted because the student is unable to engage effectively with their studies owing to external factors such as serious and persistent health problems, disability, bereavement or additional sole caring responsibilities, serious financial problems, mandatory military service, or where a part-time student’s employment pattern has changed.

A period of suspension effectively ‘stops the clock’ on the maximum study period for a set period. A suspension of studies will only be granted where there are good grounds and supporting documentation.

If you are considering suspending your study for any reason you should first discuss the situation with your School. The appropriate form is available from your School upon request and will need to be signed by the School before being submitted to the Faculty Education Director (PGT) for consideration.

The Faculty Education Director (PGT) will consider suspension requests for up to a maximum period of 12 months, where supporting documentation has been received and the request is fully supported by the school. Any suspension requests of more than 12 months will be considered at the University level by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching).

You can find out more about this process and the grounds upon which a suspension can be granted at section 6 of the Regulations and Code of Practice: www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/regulations-and-code-of-practice-for-taught-programmes/suspension/ and at https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/academic-advice/suspend-your-studies/
Suspension requests can normally only be backdated a maximum of one month.

Once a suspension request has been approved, the Faculty Education Team will confirm in writing to include the dates of suspension, expected return date and whether there are any conditions of return (e.g., being medically fit).

Students are not expected to engage with their studies during a period of suspension and are expected to confirm their return to study with the Faculty Education Team before the end of the suspension period.

**Important information for sponsored/funded students and Tier 4 visa-holding students**

If you are sponsored or funded by another body, you need to seek their permission to suspend your studies. It is the student’s responsibility to speak to their sponsor or funding body. For funded students, stipend payments will normally also be ceased for the period of the suspension of studies. If you are an ESRC-funded student there may be additional funding restrictions on suspensions. Please read the ESRC Funding Guide at [http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/).

If you are a Tier 4 visa-holding student and considering suspending your studies or making some other change to your registration status at the University, you must speak to the Student Visa Services team before submitting your suspension request form. This change will likely affect your visa status.

**Extension of Study**

An extension of study may be granted to students who require additional time to complete their programme. Grounds for an extension of study may include serious and persistent health problems, significant bereavement, additional sole caring responsibilities, serious financial problems, mandatory military service or where a part-time student’s employment pattern has changed. Any request for an extension of study must be accompanied by supporting evidence and a timeline to completion.

Extension requests will not be granted retrospectively and must be approved by your School and the Faculty Education Director (PGT).

**Important information for sponsored/funded students and Tier 4 visa-holding students**

If you are sponsored or funded by another body, you need to seek their permission to extend your studies. It is the student’s responsibility to speak to their sponsor or funding body. For funded students, stipend payments are not normally paid during the period of extension. If you are an ESRC-funded student there may be additional funding restrictions on extensions. Please read the ESRC Funding Guide at [http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/).

If you are a Tier 4 visa-holding student and considering extending your studies or making some other change to your registration status at the University, you must speak to the Student Visa Services team before submitting your extension request form. This change will likely affect your visa status.

**Withdrawal from Study / Transfer to another University**

Any student wishing to withdraw from the university or transfer to another institution must complete a withdrawal or transfer form. The appropriate form is available from your School upon request.

The University collects and holds student withdrawal data for academic, administrative and statutory reasons. All student data is collected, processed and disclosed per 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.
‘Deemed Withdrawn’

The Faculty operates a ‘deemed withdrawn’ process for students who have stopped engaging with studies. If a student is not attending the University and fails to make contact, the School will telephone and email the student twice, before contacting the Wellbeing team. The Wellbeing team and the Faculty Education Team will agree on the next steps.

If no reply is given to the Faculty, the student’s status will be changed to withdrawn. The Faculty will then issue a letter of confirmation and update the University’s student record accordingly.

The University is legally obliged to report changes of registration to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) concerning any Tier 4 visa-holding student who transfers, withdraws or who is deemed withdrawn from the University.
Student Wellbeing

Looking after your physical, mental and emotional health will help you make the most of your time here. A range of support and services are provided by the university.

**Students’ Health Service**

All new students need to register under the NHS with a local doctor when they arrive in Bristol. One such NHS doctors’ surgery is the University Students’ Health Service. The Student Health Service has a great deal of experience in dealing with a variety of health and related matters affecting students. Whilst confidentiality is always maintained, there is a particularly good liaison with academic staff if students experience stress from their studies. For more information, visit their website at: [www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/StudentHealthService/](http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/StudentHealthService/)

Hampton House Health Centre, St. Michael's Hill, Bristol
Tel: 0117 33 02720 / Home Visit Request: 0117 33 02721

**Student Wellbeing Service**

The Wellbeing Service provides a wide range of support and resources to help students manage their wellbeing and mental health while at University. They offer non-clinical advice and can help to co-ordinate the right support for you in a range of situations. For more information, visit their website at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/services/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/services/)

Tel: 0117 456 9860 (9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday)
Email: wellbeing-access@bristol.ac.uk

**Student Counselling Service**

The counselling service can provide support for a range of issues through short term individual or small group counselling. They are trained and experienced counsellors who offer specialised emotional support to students. The service is free, inclusive and available to postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students. For more information, visit their website at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/services/student-counselling-service/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/services/student-counselling-service/)

3rd Floor, Hampton House, St. Michael's Hill, Bristol
Tel: 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday +44 (0)117 456 9860
Email: wellbeing-access@bristol.ac.uk

**Multifaith Chaplaincy**

The multifaith chaplaincy is made up of a range of chaplains and local faith contacts and welcomes people of all faiths (and of no faith). They provide opportunities to explore spirituality, faith and belief; confidential personal; and give religious advice and information. For more information, visit their website at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/chaplaincy/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/chaplaincy/)

Tel: 0117 95 46600
Email: multifaith-chaplaincy@bristol.ac.uk

**Disability Services**

Disability Services provide confidential information, advice and guidance to prospective and current students with a range of disabilities, learning difficulties and other physical or mental health conditions. They offer tailored case-by-case disability-related support and identify if there is any support we can offer, such as mentoring, study skills and exam support. They can also advise on sources of funding for disability-related study support. For more information, visit their website at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/)

Tel: 0117 331 0444
Email: disability-services@bristol.ac.uk
Academic Misconduct

The University takes cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Students found to have committed a serious offence of academic misconduct such as plagiarism or to cheating, can be awarded a mark of zero for the piece of work or unit, and not be permitted to progress in their studies so have to exit with a lower qualification than the one they registered for, or be withdrawn from the programme without a lower qualification. It could also have implications for a student's professional career due to having a record of dishonesty.

The four most common types of academic misconduct offences are plagiarism, collusion, and falsification or fabrication of data.

1) Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as though it were your own. This can take several forms, including:

Obtaining an essay, e.g. from the Internet or another provider, and submitting it as your work either in part or in full.

Using another student's work and submitting it as your work either in part or in full.

Self-Plagiarism, i.e. reusing your material which you have already submitted elsewhere without referencing it.

Copying, or electronically cutting and pasting, sections (i.e., even parts of sentences) of someone's work, without using quotation marks to mark what text is not yours. Passages quoted from other authors, or your previous work, must be identified in quotations and the sources of the quoted material must be acknowledged by the student. Use of unacknowledged sources may be construed as plagiarism.

'Borrowing' the structure of an argument from another writer and following this too closely, presenting it as your own, without acknowledgement. You may not copy verbatim sections from the original, but you are still presenting someone else's ideas and work as your own. Depending on the extent to which you do this, it may make it difficult to assess the work as your own, and result in a mark of zero for the unit.

Contract cheating – where an organisation or individual contracts with students to complete an assignment for the student for a fee. Contract cheating is a very serious breach of academic integrity.

The University of Bristol, like most UK universities, uses Turnitin UK Plagiarism Detection Software. This system detects similarities with internet sources, other students' work, books and journal articles. Most assignments are routinely run through Turnitin software and any with a high instance of similarity with other sources will be considered further either at School or Faculty level.

All Schools in the Faculty run sessions on good academic practise and avoidance of plagiarism at various points during the academic year. **You should attend these sessions to ensure you follow correct referencing procedures and have a full understanding of what is required in submitting assignments.**

More information about plagiarism can be found at:
- [https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/academic-advice/plagiarism/](https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/academic-advice/plagiarism/)
- Or the Study Skills pages [www.bristol.ac.uk/students/study/skills-development/study-skills/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/study/skills-development/study-skills/).

2) Collusion

Collusion is unauthorised collaboration with another student to produce work together. While we expect you to work cooperatively with other students and enjoy discussing your work with each other, what you submit for assessment must be your own. As a rule of thumb, you should never share any electronic or other written material relating to an assessment task with another student.
3) Unauthorised materials in examinations

Many examinations do not permit students to take any materials at all into the examination room. Some examinations permit certain printed material or certain dictionaries. However, very few, if any, are ‘open book’, allowing you to take your notes in. Each unit will make it very clear what is and is not allowed, and this will also appear on the rubric at the top of the examination paper. You should note that it is an offence simply to have unauthorised material with you. It is, therefore (at best), extremely foolish to engage in activity which results in possession of unauthorised material (such as writing on your hand) in the examination.

4) Falsification or fabrication of data

The authenticity of research findings, and the trust that others have in them, are reliant on the quality of data from which the findings and conclusions are developed. Fabrication – making up data – or falsification – changing, excluding or altering data – undermines the quality of data and so the findings. Offences of this nature are considered very serious and may be referred for consideration under Student Disciplinary Regulations.

Procedures

The University has a set of procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions that plagiarism or an examination offence has occurred. Small irregularities which amount to poor academic practice can be dealt with as a matter of marking and the student later notified. Cases involving the suspicion of plagiarism or other offence will be considered by either a School Panel or a Faculty Panel, depending on the seriousness. Small volumes of plagiarised material may be treated as minor, substantial amounts of plagiarised material; unauthorised materials in examinations and collusion are serious. Minor cases are dealt with by a School Panel; serious cases by a Faculty Panel chaired by the Faculty Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Officer.

The University Examination Regulations outline the procedures to be followed in cases of student plagiarism and cheating and can be found at www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/examregs.html.
Complaints and Appeals

In the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, we try very hard to make decisions which are fair, and which take proper account of the personal circumstances of each student. Inevitably, however, sometimes things go wrong and sometimes you will disagree with a decision that affects you. For this reason, the University has a system for dealing with student grievances and appeals.

Complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about action or lack of action by the University or the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the University.

The University aims to operate a fair and transparent student complaints procedure and students will not suffer any detriment by making a complaint. Before starting any formal complaint process, all informal means available within the Faculty must be exhausted. This means that you should try to seek a resolution within your School before involving the Faculty PGT Director. Disputes can often be resolved in this way, which saves everyone concerned much time and effort.

If you have a complaint and have been unable to solve by speaking to your School and the Faculty PGT Director, you may contact the Student Complaints Officer to arrange mediation as part of the Student Complaints Procedure. Further information on the student complaints procedure can be found at http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/student-rules-regs/.

Appeals

An academic appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progress, assessment and awards. Appeals are normally about examinations or another form of assessment, a student’s progress, or a penalty imposed for cheating or plagiarism. These decisions are formally ratified by the Faculty in a process which will already have given the student a chance to make representations, for example, by submitting extenuating circumstances. Before appealing, you must familiarise yourself with the Examination Regulations at http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/student-rules-regs/. Students are also advised to take advice from the Just Ask Service at the Students’ Union, who can offer independent advice.

Some general principles apply which you may find useful:
- Any relevant medical or other extenuating circumstances MUST be presented in advance of any decision at which they are to be considered. Your School will have made the relevant deadlines clear.
- The University appeals process does not seek to question the academic judgment of examiners, but broadly speaking, checks that the processes and decisions were fairly made based on proper information. Disagreement about the quality of your work is not a ground for appeal.
- Formal appeals against the decision of a Board of Examiners must be made within 15 working days of notification of the decision of the Faculty Examination Board/Progress Committee which ratifies them. The Faculty meeting will take place after the School-level meeting.

You can submit an appeal by submitting an appeal form to the Faculty Education Manager at fssl_appeals@bristol.ac.uk. Further information including the form can be found at https://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/support/academic-advice/academic-appeal/

Just Ask

Just Ask is a free, confidential advice service provided by Bristol Students’ Union. Just Ask specialises in academic Advice but University of Bristol students can go to them about anything and they can signpost them to relevant services and provide information. More information is available on their website: https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/advice-support. Tel: 0117 331 8634 - Email: bristolsu-justask@bristol.ac.uk.
Students must adhere to all relevant regulations relating to their programme. Taught postgraduate students should become familiar with the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, the University Examination Regulations and Rules and Regulations for Students. These Regulations should be read in conjunction with school/subject-specific guidance but have precedence over any local information.

The Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes can be accessed at:
http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html.

The Regulations and Code of Practice contain key information on the assessment and progression rules for taught postgraduate students, for example:

- General regulations for taught postgraduate programmes
- Forms and conduct of assessment
- The Marking Process
- Assessment Outcomes
- Roles and responsibilities

University Examination Regulations

The University’s Examination Regulations specify the examination rules and the procedures for dealing with examination offences such as plagiarism and cheating and student appeals. They can be found at:


In addition, University’s Rules and Regulations for Students can be found at:
www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/

The regulations cover several important areas such as the Student Agreement and regulations for the use of library and computing facilities.

These regulations are supplemented by School and Programme Handbooks.
Postgraduate Programmes and Support

Programmes and Units

Students can find useful information about their programmes and programme structures in individual school handbooks and programme specifications or online at https://www.bris.ac.uk/unit-programme-catalogue/Welcome.jsa

Taught Masters students will normally write a dissertation or undertake a project following successful completion of mandatory and optional units. Students who are studying for a postgraduate diploma or postgraduate certificate will normally take mandatory and optional units. Students on a professional postgraduate programme may also take part in learning or assessment scenarios/placements designed to enhance their professional practice and allow for the evaluation of specific skills. Each programme has a Programme Director, with overall responsibility for its design and delivery. If you are in any doubt about the requirements for your degree programme, you should consult the Programme Director at your school.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we have adapted our teaching to include more online delivery, so we can keep everyone as safe as possible. We call this blended learning. We will be offering as many in-person teaching opportunities as safely possible. Blended learning includes:

- in-person learning, following the social distancing guidelines in place at the time
- live online learning, using a range of software
- online learning using recordings teachers have prepared for you to watch in your own time, with associated activities
- self-study tasks eg reading or structured problems for you to work on.

You will have regular contact with your lecturers and fellow students, and tasks may include group work. The mix of learning methods will be different for each subject.

Your school will let you know about any individual requirements for your course.

More details regarding blended learning can be found at http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/your-studies/study-2020/your-course/

Credit Points

Credit points are awarded for successful completion of the units that make up your postgraduate degree programme and you will be informed about the precise unit requirements of each unit you study. Please note that some units may make a certain level of attendance as well as the completion of assignments or examinations compulsory for the award of credit points. Each school provides a handbook, which gives details of different units and their assessment and reassessment requirements. Students need to satisfactorily complete a specified number of units and credit points to gain a postgraduate award.

The University guidelines state that one credit point is broadly equivalent to 10 hours of total student input. This includes teaching, private study, revision and assessments. Therefore a 20-credit point unit will normally require 200 hours of student input.

Personal Tutors and Supervisors

In most schools, personal tutors help you with your academic and personal development whilst you are at university. This person should know you reasonably well, keep an eye on how you are doing, meet you regularly, and be there if you need to arrange an individual appointment. The School of Economics, School of Finance and Accounting, and the School of Management each operate a responsive postgraduate tutoring system instead of a personal tutoring system. The schools provide details on the team and how to contact them for support and advice. Once you start your dissertation or project, you will also be allocated a supervisor.
Please keep your Personal Tutor or Supervisor informed of any circumstances that impact on your studies and keep in regular contact with School staff.

**Support for Part-Time students**

If you are a part-time student, please note that each school has a designated academic or administrative point of contact for all part-time students. In order to be directed to the School representatives concerning part-time students, please contact:

- School of Accounting and Finance: acli-pgt@bristol.ac.uk
- School of Economics: econ-pgt@bristol.ac.uk
- School of Education: ed-masters-students@bristol.ac.uk
- School of Geographical Sciences: geog-pgadmin@bristol.ac.uk
- School of Management: mgmt-pgt@bristol.ac.uk
- University of Bristol Law School: law-pg-office@bristol.ac.uk
- School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies: spais-pg@bristol.ac.uk
- School for Policy Studies: sps-pgadmin@bristol.ac.uk

**School Offices**

Each School has a student-facing office where you can speak to someone regarding any administrative matters. Some School offices have particular opening hours and students should refer to their School/programme handbook for more information.

**Support**

The University has a wide range of support facilities for students including Students’ Health Service, Student Counselling, Careers Service and Multifaith Chaplaincy. More information is available at: [www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/).

Details of the support available for disabled students is available from the Disability Services website at: [www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/).

**CALD and Academic Language and Literacy**

Academic Language and Literacy (ALL) is available in your School via the Centre for Academic Language and Development. Further information is available at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-language/study/current-students/all/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-language/study/current-students/all/).

**Study Skills**

Whether you are new to the university, have not studied for a while, or are part way through your degree, there is a set of skills that are essential to your success.

The University’s Study Skills service will help you to develop and enhance those skills so that you're better prepared for university study, helping you to improve your grades and even helping in your professional and personal life.

More information is available here: [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/study/skills-development/study-skills/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/study/skills-development/study-skills/) or through the Study Skills link at the top of any BlackBoard unit area.
Student Progress and Monitoring

The Faculty expects taught postgraduate students to make excellent progress in their studies and to complete assessment and professional competency requirements within the normal study period for their award. Student progress is monitored to ensure that programme completion rates remain high and to comply with statutory reporting.

Attendance and Progress Monitoring

All taught postgraduate students are monitored in terms of attendance and performance on the programme. Students are required to maintain a very good level of attendance and remain engaged with their programme of study. In the Student Agreement you agreed to:

- attend educational activities (lectures, seminars, tutorials, laboratory classes and so on) as are defined in your programme, subject to absence for medical or other agreed reasons.
- complete and submit by the required deadlines any work to be assessed as part of your programme.
- work hard and diligently, contributing effectively to your programme and respecting the needs of your fellow students


Students who fail to maintain good attendance may be referred by the School to the Faculty. Based on the information received, the Faculty will contact the student to check on their status and/or make changes to their student status as appropriate to the circumstances (e.g. deem them withdrawn).

To fulfil its statutory obligations, Schools will monitor the engagement of Tier 4 visa holding students via expected contact points between students and their programme of study, and report on these monthly through an online monitoring system. Expected contacts may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- attendance at lectures, tutorials or seminars
- attendance at test, examinations or assessment board
- attendance at practicals, laboratory session or, clinical sessions
- submission of assessed or un-assessed coursework
- submission of dissertation/coursework/reports
- attendance at any meeting with a supervisor or personal tutor
- attendance on field trips
Assessment and Examination Procedures

The University Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes (Rules for Assessment, Progression and the Award of the Qualification):  [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html) governs the way that assessment and progression are conducted for taught programmes within the Faculty. Also, the University’s Examination Regulations cover examinations and the procedure for dealing with student cases of plagiarism and cheating as well as student appeals.

You will need to be familiar with the above Regulations, the Faculty guidance (below) and School guidance during your studies.

Assessment in the Faculty

The Faculty’s taught postgraduate programmes are assessed and classified in line with the University’s Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes which is available at [http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html)

School and Faculty Examination Boards

School and Programme Boards of Examiners’ meetings normally take place in the Summer and Autumn terms and at dates specified in school handbooks. These Boards moderate and agree on student marks for examinations and assignments, award credit points to students, recommend the award: Masters degrees with a pass, merit or distinction classifications and recommend Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate awards. Decisions on whether or not students may progress to the dissertation stage of a Masters programme are made in the light of all the marks achieved, programme-specific requirements and any other relevant data on student performance and potential to complete a dissertation satisfactorily. Students who fail any assessments or who are not awarded the full complement of credit points are recorded and advised of reassessment opportunities.

The Faculty Examination Board (Postgraduate) normally ratifies final taught postgraduate awards for full-time students so that students can graduate at the Spring degree congregations. The Board also ratifies final awards for part-time taught postgraduates and those students exiting with a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma, throughout the year and considers penalty recommendations from Faculty plagiarism panels to ensure consistency of treatment.

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html
Student Progression in Taught Modular Programmes

For the latest version of the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes please go to: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html

Taught Component

Students must pass the taught element of the programme to progress to the dissertation stage. For full-time programmes taught over one year, students must achieve 120 credits before progressing to the dissertation stage. For full-time programmes taught over two full academic years, students must pass the first year before progressing to the second year. There are several criteria for successful progression and students should familiarize themselves with the section 38 Student progression and completion (PGT) in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

Progression to the Dissertation Stage

Progression to the dissertation stage is normally only permitted on the satisfactory completion of the taught component. However, you may start work on your dissertation before your results in the taught component are confirmed by a Faculty Exam Board, on the understanding that:

- you start your project at your own risk and your dissertation will not be assessed if you do not pass the taught component
- you may be required to stop working on your dissertation to prepare for resits in September (you would resume work on your dissertation after you have passed your September resits)

**NOTE:** You will not be allowed to continue with your dissertation at all if you have failed more than 60 credits at the first attempt, or if you fail a re-assessment, and must, therefore, withdraw from your MSc studies.

Progression for part-time students

Part-time students will need to discuss their plans with the appropriate academic advisor (Programme Director or Personal Tutor) in their School to ensure they will complete their programme promptly. All part-time variable students must register for, and engage with, a minimum of one unit per academic year. The Programme Director and the Graduate Dean must approve any exceptional cases where a student is unable to meet this requirement. A student who does not take at least one unit per year and who does not have an approved exemption will be required to withdraw from his/her studies.

Dissertation

For Masters degrees, students must also achieve the pass mark for the dissertation to be awarded the credit points necessary to complete the programme.

The re-submission of the dissertation is permitted where a mark between 45-49 has been achieved and, also, the examiners recommend that it is suitable for re-assessment, otherwise the student may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma. The recorded mark for any re-submitted dissertation will be capped at the minimum pass mark (50%) even if the student achieves a higher mark in the re-submission.

Re-submission of the dissertation must normally be made within 3 months of the student being notified by the Faculty Board of Examiners of its decision (and within 6 months for part-time students and 12 months for part-time variable students).

In both the taught component and dissertation stages, the University will consider valid extenuating circumstances if a student’s performance at the time of the assessment is likely to have been affected by extenuating circumstances i.e. illness or close family bereavement.
Additional Information for ESRC-funded Studentship (1+3) Holders (SWDTP)

Information and Guidance

ESRC studentship-holders who have questions or queries about their awards should first read the ESRC’s guidance which is available from the ESRC website: https://esrc.ukri.org/skills-and-careers/doctoral-training/esrc-students/

Further information on the award payments (including sick leave and maternity leave payments) can be found in the ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide: https://esrc.ukri.org/skills-and-careers/doctoral-training/prospective-students/postgraduate-funding-guide/

Forms and information regarding applying for SWDTP funds (Such as Overseas Fieldwork and Institutional Visits) and placement enquiries can be found on the SWDTP website: http://www.swdtp.ac.uk/

Information around the requirements for RTSG and expenses payments can be found in the SWDTP handbook: http://www.swdtp.ac.uk/information-for-current-students/.

Contacts

- For University of Bristol related queries, including Je-S:
  Please contact the Faculty Education Team at swdtp-brisol@bristol.ac.uk
- ESRC regulatory enquiries:
  Please contact the SWDTP Hub at swdtp-enquiries@bristol.ac.uk
- For payment enquiries:
  Please contact Cath Pullinger in the Faculty Finance Team at cath.pullinger@bristol.ac.uk

Please note: the ESRC does not permit studentship-holders to contact the ESRC directly.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

The ESRC and the University expect ESRC studentship-holders to make excellent progress in their 1 + 3 (MRes + PhD) programme. The University’s Annual Progress Monitoring and Progression Review procedures are designed to monitor the performance of research students. Please note that continuation on an ESRC studentship is subject to satisfactory academic progress.

Any issues which interrupt a student’s progress, such as suspension, maternity leave, long-term illness or failure to make progress, MUST be reported to the Faculty immediately so that appropriate advice can be given.

Changes to Studentships Which Impact on Funding or Submission Dates

Any change to an ESRC studentship, which impacts on funding, must be approved by the ESRC in advance. Applications for Extension or Suspension should be submitted as normal via your School. It is the student’s responsibility to speak to the SWDTP before submitting a request. Email: swdtp-enquiries@bristol.ac.uk.

In the case of suspensions, stipend payments will be suspended for the period of suspension of studies.

Examples, where approval must be sought in advance, include:
- Extensions and Suspensions of study
- Delays in progression from the MRes/MSc (1+3) to the PhD (+3)
- Maternity leave (and adoption leave)

Payment of Awards

The University’s Student Funding Office will issue cheques and BACS payments to ESRC studentship-holders and deals with any payment queries. Each ESRC studentship-holder has a finance account against which is recorded additional expenditure e.g. RTSG, overseas fieldwork expenses.

Further details about the RTSG can be found at: https://www.swdtp.ac.uk/funding-for-current-students/