

# Postgraduate Research Start Dates Policy

## Summary

This policy defines the available intake points for research degree programmes at the University, in order to optimise student experience and efficient processes.

<b>Control information:</b>	<b>Control detail:</b>
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## 1. Updates to this policy

- 1.1. The table of available intake points has been updated to reflect the change to academic structures and align with three faculties.
- 1.2. This policy has been updated to align to the new University of Bristol policy management framework.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1. The University restricts Postgraduate Research (PGR) programme start dates to a defined set of intake points across the year, to optimise the:
  - the PGR student experience of starting a research degree
  - efficient management of PGR processes such as registration, funding management and Annual Progress Monitoring.

## 3. Scope

- 3.1. All applicants to, and students starting, Postgraduate Research degrees at the University.
- 3.2. Research programmes with a taught component are by necessity also aligned with the teaching year so only a subset of these intake points is available to such programmes.

## 4. Definitions

- 4.1. **Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS):** ATAS applies to certain foreign students and researchers who want to study or conduct research in specific sensitive technology-related fields in the UK. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) administers the scheme and issues ATAS certificates.
- 4.2. **Postgraduate Research (PGR):** Advanced, independent study undertaken after a bachelor's degree, aiming to contribute original knowledge to a specific academic field. The [University offers traditional PhD and research master's degrees, as well as professional and extended doctoral programmes.](#)
- 4.3. **Teaching block (TB):** A block of weeks allocated to teaching delivery.

## 5. Responsibilities

- 5.1. **Faculties:** Have the responsibility of adhering to the PGR start date principles, and the available start dates for their faculties as shown in the table in this policy.
- 5.2. **PGR Admissions:** Have the responsibility of ensuring that accurate PGR start date information is publicised to students and included on offer letters where appropriate.

## 6. PGR start dates principles

- 6.1. Programme start dates are aligned with the academic calendar, and calendar months. Permitted start dates are:
  - a. **September - main intake point;** available start date is Monday of Welcome Week (TB-1).
    - Doctoral Training Entities with an integrated taught component will normally only be able to accept new students at this point.
  - b. January - available start date is the Monday of Preparation Week (TB-2). This intake is mainly used for students who are completing an MSc degree as a condition of entry.
  - c. October to December and February to July - available start dates are first Monday of each month that does not fall on a public holiday or university closure day. These intakes should mainly be used where a September or January start date is delayed by funding, ATAS approval or visa, or to accommodate clinical commitments in Health Sciences.
  - d. August - no start point available to avoid disruption during a busy period, including progression, registration and fee & funding processes.
- 6.2. Faculties make a subset of these start points available **for application to** programmes in their portfolio.
- 6.3. Where a student's individual circumstances warrant, e.g. delay to funding, ATAS approval or visa approval, the faculty may choose to offer a later start date for the individual student from the list of permitted dates outlined in section 6.1.

*Table 1: PGR Start dates for applicants by Faculty*

<b>Month</b>	<b>Available start date</b>	<b>Arts, Social Sciences and Law</b>	<b>Science, Engineering</b>	<b>Health and Life Sciences</b>
<b>August</b>	No PGR start date available			
<b>September</b>	Monday of Welcome Week	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>October</b>	1st Monday of month			Yes
<b>November</b>	1st Monday of month		Yes	Yes
<b>December</b>	1st Monday of month			Yes
<b>January</b>	Monday of Preparation Week	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>February</b>	1st Monday of month			Yes
<b>March</b>	1st Monday of month			Yes
<b>April</b>	1st Monday of month			Yes
<b>May</b>	1st Monday of month		Yes	Yes
<b>June</b>	1st Monday of month			Yes
<b>July</b>	1st Monday of month		Yes	Yes