



**University of Bristol  
Department of Social Medicine**

# **Policy for Research Students and Supervisors**

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## Recruitment

The Department is keen to attract students with a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds to study for higher degrees (PhD, MD, MSc by research). The Department will:

1. Advertise specific studentships externally (for example in selected other Departments, via email listings, through *jobs.ac.uk*, *Nature*, *findaphd.com* and in *Education Guardian* if appropriate), and internally within the University of Bristol.
2. Shortlist students following submission of the university application form and a 2-page research proposal evaluated by at least two members of staff.
3. Select students for specific studentships following competitive interview with at least two members of staff including the members of staff expected to be the student's principal supervisors.
4. Any members of the research staff may apply to read for a higher degree. They must complete the University application form, which will be assessed by at least two members of staff and be followed by an interview.
5. Where students are self-funded, selection will be as above (from 2).
6. MD applicants are also required to submit a 2 to 4 page proposal which will be sent to two external and independent referees not connected with the project. The MD applicant will be expected to satisfactorily respond to the comments of the external reviewers before the application is processed further.

For students recruited using the above procedures, the Department will:

1. Want evidence of English Language proficiency (for overseas applicants). The Faculty requires that all overseas postgraduate students show a competence in English equal to a minimum score of 610 TOEFL (253 Computer based test); 6.5 on the IELTS or Cambridge for English Grade C - although the University of Bristol prefers IELTS. (test scores should normally not be more than 2 years old)
2. Provide a clear statement as to the length of the studentship (e.g. 3 or 4 years full-time for a PhD).
3. Name the main supervisor and joint supervisor.
4. Ensure that Supervisors do not advise more than 5 students at one time, and no more than 2 at the same stage (i.e. likely to complete their degrees at the same time).

Students wishing to read for a PhD who do not hold a higher degree will be registered initially for an MSc and upgraded to PhD with satisfactory progress.

### **Departmental facilities**

The following facilities will be provided for each full-time research student joining the Department:

1. A desk in the Department with access to a telephone, in a room with other research students if this is possible.
2. A filing cabinet or other storage facility for papers.
3. A networked PC with e-mail facilities.
4. Access to a bookable high performance PC capable of handling large word-processing and database files, with priority given to use by research students.

In addition, the department has a library with on-site literature searching databases (e.g. Medline, Psychlit).

### **Research training**

The Department will provide research training in addition to that provided by individual Supervisors. This training will include structured short courses run by members of the Department in a wide range of topics (see <http://www.epi.bris.ac.uk/shortc/shortc.htm>) e.g. Human Genetics, Bioinformatics, Genetic Association Studies, Introduction to Stata, Critical Appraisal of Quantitative Research, Basic Epidemiological Methods, Basic Statistics, Questionnaire Design and Analyses, Health protection principles and practice, Introduction to qualitative research methods, Data Management for health research using MS Access, Advanced Stata, Introduction to regression methods, Analysis of longitudinal (cohort) studies, Systematic reviews in health care: meta-analysis in context, Health economics, Design and analysis of randomised trials, Critically appraising a qualitative paper.

Students should discuss with their supervisors, and have approved, the short courses that are relevant to their research, transferable and generic training / skills needs and when it is best for these to be done. Not all short courses should be done in year 1, but should be spread throughout the 3-4 years of each student's PhD programme to reflect the training needs during each specific year (e.g. the focus should be on basic research training courses in year 1; more advanced research training courses, relevant to the PhD, in years 2-3; wider skills training, beyond the specific PhD requirements, in years 3-4, if required).

Generic research skills are taught through the Departmental Graduate Studies Programme.

The University also provides a number of courses specifically for research students, and a range of computer and other courses.

Students are strongly encouraged to attend weekly Departmental seminars and journal clubs, as well as relevant conferences to present their work (within funding constraints). Students should maintain a portfolio of training activities undertaken and submit this at annual reviews.

### **Roberts fund**

Roberts funding is available for postgraduate training and can be applied for to supplement existing allowances for any courses / conferences. Students should complete a form available from the Departmental postgraduate administrator. The information required on the form includes: 1. Course/Conference Title; 2. Why am I doing this? - What do I hope to gain from this activity? How does it fit into my learning needs/PDP? How does it build on the Generic training programme eg will there be a presentation at a conference that can be linked to the presentation skills workshop?; 3. Confirmation of supervisor approval; 4. Detailed budget. Students will also need to complete a short report after the course/conference.

### **Graduate tutor**

A named senior member of staff will act as graduate tutor for research students. The graduate tutor will:

1. Develop and co-ordinate Departmental policy regarding higher degree research students.
2. Hold copies of all relevant details concerning individual studentships, requirements for presentation of thesis, procedures for the selection of examiners, and procedures for the representation of these or appeals.
3. Provide the Departmental link to the Faculty Graduate School.
4. Maintain a database of postgraduate students.
5. Provide support and advice for students and supervisors experiencing difficulties.
6. Facilitate any changes of supervisor required.
7. Communicate actively with the higher degrees student group.
8. Take responsibility for co-ordinating reviews and upgrading.
9. Administer and co-ordinate new applications for studentships.
10. Identify suitable courses for students and Supervisors.
11. Prepare and provide an induction programme for new students.
12. Chair an annual supervisors meeting to present and review the policy and discuss other related developments.

### **Annual Review**

At the end of each year, all full-time students will prepare a report (up to 2,000 words), detailing their progress and training to date. They will submit

this written report and present their findings to the supervisor, and at least one other member of staff not involved in the project. The written report should be submitted to the reviewers at least one week before the review date. First year students without an MSc will be required to formally “upgrade” to a PhD. The process is identical to that outlined above and the 2000 word report acts as the ‘mini theses’ referred to in the University of Bristol form for ‘Upgrade to Phd’.

In the report the student should list progress in the last year, focusing on training undertaken, main tasks completed, and including as appropriate literature reviews, fieldwork or data collection, original work, seminars given and chapters completed, plans for the next year including the main tasks and training to be undertaken. Completed chapters, literature reviews and other relevant written work can be included as Appendices, in addition to the 2000 word report. The front-page of the report should include: date of the report; student’s name; list the supervisors; title of research; the date of commencement of the PhD; the expected submission date.

The reviewing team will recommend one of the following:

1. Unconditional progress to next year.
2. Progress to next year conditional on completion of targets set by review group and monitored by supervisor (upgrading may be allowed or delayed).
3. Writing up for MSc rather than PhD or termination of studentship or study.
4. Appeals or disputes will be considered in the first instance by the Graduate Tutor and Head of Department. If there is no resolution at this stage, appeals or disputes will be referred to the Graduate Dean.
5. Upgrade to PhD is required for all students who do not have an MSc prior to beginning their PhD. Procedures for upgrade are determined by the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

There will be an interim 6-month review in the first year, involving completion of a structured report by the student and supervisors. This interim review outlines progress, training undertaken and future plans and should be signed by the supervisors and the student.

### **Supervisors’ responsibilities**

1. To give guidance about the nature of the research and the standard to be expected; to advise about the planning of the research programme and about relevant literature and sources; to direct the student to attend taught courses whenever necessary; to encourage students to acquire and maintain familiarity with relevant developments in the subject; to give advice about requisite techniques and arrange for

instruction where necessary; and if necessary advise the student that he or she should undertake instruction in written and/or spoken English. Supervisors should make themselves familiar with the University Code of Practice for Research Degrees ([www.bristol.ac.uk/tsu/policy/cop-research-degrees.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/tsu/policy/cop-research-degrees.html)).

2. To meet with the student shortly after the student's arrival and to maintain contact through regular supervisory sessions as agreed with each student, but on average not less than once per fortnight in the first year and once per month thereafter for full-time students (part-time *pro rata*).
3. To be accessible to students at other appropriate and reasonable times when advice may be needed.
4. To encourage students to attend Departmental seminars.
5. To encourage students to maintain a training portfolio.
6. To attend University courses on supervision and examining theses.
7. In the event of being granted study leave or leave of absence, proposing adequate arrangements for supervision of the student.
8. To give detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work so that the whole may be submitted within the scheduled time.
9. To request written work as appropriate, and to return such work in reasonable time and with constructive criticism about both technical details and on writing style.
10. To encourage the student to attend or speak at meetings or conferences and provide advice with regard to publication of the research.
11. To ensure that the student is made aware of any inadequacy of progress or of standards of work below the expected.
12. To advise the Graduate Tutor or Head of Department and the student if there is significant likelihood of the student failing the degree for which he or she wishes to submit.
13. To submit a progress report within the first six months of the student's start date to the Graduate Tutor on the appropriate form after due discussion with the student.
14. To submit annual progress reports to the Graduate Tutor on the appropriate form after due discussion with the student.
15. To advise the student on the appropriateness and preparation for upgrading from MSc to PhD, and to ensure that the Faculty procedures for upgrading have been followed.
16. To advise the Head of Department of suitable examiners.
17. To offer advice, as appropriate, to students about career development.
18. To give advice on the preparation of thesis and on preparation for any oral examination, commenting on a draft thesis and advising the student if the standard of English is inadequate. The supervisor is not expected to undertake substantial editing or revision of a draft thesis.
19. To be aware of the University guidelines for staff on student welfare and health (e.g. student mental health; equality & diversity - policy

documents available from Graduate Tutor, Head of Teaching or <http://www.bris.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/>).

## **Research Students' responsibilities**

1. To agree with the supervisor a suitable topic for research and working on that topic.
2. To agree with the supervisor a schedule of meetings and attending such meetings and informing the supervisor how he or she can be contacted. Students are responsible for recording brief minutes of meetings with supervisors and for recording formal action points: a copy of this record should be sent to the supervisors soon after the meeting.
3. To produce work in accordance with a schedule agreed with the supervisor including, in particular, the submission of written material in sufficient time for the next stage of the research programme.
4. To be prepared to take the initiative in realising problems or difficulties, however elementary they may seem.
5. To attend Departmental seminars weekly during term time, and the graduate students programme monthly, and to attend short courses with the Department and University as recommended by the supervisor.
6. To maintain a training portfolio.
7. To familiarise him or herself with the regulations for the appropriate degree and with instructions and guidelines issued by the University, Faculty or Department (see [www.bristol.ac.uk/tsu/policy/cop-research-degrees.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/tsu/policy/cop-research-degrees.html)).
8. In the event of the student being dissatisfied with any aspect of the advisory or other arrangements, to discuss such dissatisfaction with the Graduate Tutor at the earliest possible opportunity and in particular before submitting a thesis. In the event of such discussions not producing a satisfactory outcome, the student should submit a formal written statement to the Faculty's Graduate Studies officer, before the end of period of registration, outlining the reasons for his or her dissatisfaction.
9. To develop during the first year of studentship, a thesis outline to guide the programme of research.
10. To provide a written report for the formal review of progress.
11. To discuss with the supervisor the preparation of the thesis and decide when it is ready for submission after taking due account of advice from the supervisor.
12. To submit a thesis within the time allowed by the regulations.

*Students should note that they are responsible for their work and that the role of the supervisor is to provide guidance and advice.*

## Student and supervisor feedback

1. A nominated postgraduate student representative acts as a conduit to feedback student views to the Graduate Tutor.
2. During term-time, student feedback is sought every month at the start of each tutorial session by the Graduate Tutor.
3. A nominated postgraduate student representative represents the student body at each Annual Programme Review, conducted by the Department.
4. A nominated postgraduate student representative represents the student body at the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.
5. A student from each year, including at least one overseas student (as appropriate), represents the student body during the annual FQAT visits

## Administrative details

1. *Registration.* All students must register with the Faculty Office on the appropriate form. It is not possible to backdate PhD candidature (MD candidature can be backdated by 6 months).
2. *Monitoring of progress.* Supervisors report twice a year in year 1 and annually thereafter to the Graduate Tutor using the form provided. The first part of the form is completed by the supervisor with an account of the student's progress since the previous report and of the tasks to be undertaken before the next report. Students comment in the space provided on the last part of the form. The Graduate Tutor reads all reports and takes appropriate action where there are difficulties.
3. *Change of title.* Students should discuss the title of their thesis with their supervisor. Changes of title have to be agreed by the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Graduate Studies Committee.
4. *Change of supervisor.* If students wish to change their supervisor (or advisers their students) it is usually possible and desirable to do this by discussion between student and adviser. The Graduate Tutor will offer advice. If agreement cannot be reached then the Head of Department will be approached to make the final decision. It may be possible for supervisors to be consulted outside the Department. Once agreed, the change of supervisor should be reported to the Faculty Graduate Studies Office and to the body awarding the studentship.
5. *Extension of study.* The minimum and maximum periods of study are as follows for a PhD:

<b>Status</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Full time student	3 years	4 years
Part time student	6 years	8 years

For an MD, these are:

<b>Status</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Part time student	2 years	5 years

For an MSc, these are:

<b>Status</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Full time student	1 year	3 years
Part-time	2 years	4 years

Permission to exceed this period must be sought from the appropriate Faculty Board well before the period has ended with compelling reasons and supervisor's full support. A form giving reasons for the extension, the extent of progress already made, and the work plan agreed between student and department must be completed, signed by the supervisor the Departmental Graduate Tutor. Extensions of study are not backdated, nor are they extended beyond the period initially agreed, except with the permission of the Graduate Dean.

6. *Suspension of studies.* Candidates within their period of study may, in exceptional circumstances, be granted permission, for good academic or personal reasons, to suspend their studies for a stated period. This means that the date of submission is moved forward by the stated period and the payment of fees is frozen. A form giving the reasons for the recommendation of suspension must be completed by the supervisor and signed by the Head of Department of Graduate Tutor, and sent to the Graduate Studies Office for agreement.
7. *Examiners.* Examiners are appointed by the University on the nomination of the Head of Department after approval by the Dean. The Head of Department should consult the supervisor and candidate before nominating examiners. At least two examiners will be appointed, usually one external and one internal (i.e. within the University of Bristol).
8. *Viva.* All PhD students and some MSc students will be required to have a viva voce examination. Departments require the personal approval of the VC to waive the requirement for a viva for PhD students. Candidates will be given at least 10 days notice of the date of the viva.
9. *Printing and binding of theses:* Students are expected to pay for photocopying and binding of theses using their own funds. Departmental printers should not be used for printing out multiple copies of theses for binding.
10. *Conference budget:* Students have access to a fixed conference budget administered by the postgraduate secretary. All requests to use the funds have to be approved by the Graduate Tutor. Approval will not normally be given to use these funds to purchase textbooks.

11. *University of Bristol Doctoral Regulations*: These can be found at the following website:  
[http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cms/go/statutes/regs/regulations/docmasters/index\\_html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cms/go/statutes/regs/regulations/docmasters/index_html)

### **Information for internal examiners**

The internal examiner acts as the examination coordinator. It is their responsibility to:

- Inform the student and Higher Degrees Office of the time and place of any oral exam, giving the candidate a minimum of 10 days notice in writing.
- Organise submission of a completed report

Examiners' report forms are available from the Higher Degrees Office and on the Web. The candidate's full name, the title of the dissertation and the date of the examination should be included. Both examiners should sign the report and continuation sheets, and their names should be typed alongside their signatures. The report should clearly indicate their recommendations. Internal examiners are required to return the original, signed examiners' report, once it has been counter-signed by the head of department, to the Higher Degrees Office.

The report should enable the Higher Degrees Examination Board or Faculty Graduate Studies Committee to assess the scope and significance of the work submitted by the candidate and should comment on the oral examination. Where appropriate, the report should include discussion of:

- Topic/purpose of the research
- Originality and advancement of knowledge
- Scientific standard
- Literary standard
- Performance in the oral examination
- The student's review of the literature
- Methods and student's application of research methods
- Student's contribution & extent of collaboration

If examiners cannot agree, they should submit separate reports.

### **Teaching opportunities for postgraduate research students**

The opportunities listed below exist for students to gain experience of teaching. It is suggested that most students would look to take these opportunities in their 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year, when their PhD project is established and their PhD progress has been assessed. A discussion around obtaining some teaching experience could form part of the first year review if this is being

considered. All students who have duties with respect to any aspect of teaching, learning or assessment should register for the Teaching and Learning Programme for Postgraduate Students offered by the Graduate School of Education.

### **1. 1<sup>st</sup> year undergraduate medical students**

*Clinical epidemiology* (contact: David Evans):

*Society in Health & Medicine* (contact: Mary Shaw or Suzanne Audrey)

Within these courses there are opportunities for students to:

1. Sit in with an experienced tutor for the 11 session course
2. "Team teach" with a tutor for those who have previously sat in or with relevant previous teaching experience
3. For the clinical epidemiology course, develop self assessment computer aided learning tools for students (CALnet questions) with Yoav Ben Shlomo.
4. Help write exam assessments.

### **2. 4<sup>th</sup> year undergraduate medical students**

*COMP1: Public Health and Evidence Based Clinical Practice.*

Research students should discuss any plans to teach on COMP1 with their supervisor in the first instance, and then with Chris Metcalfe. Those research students who are able to contribute will be allocated to the teaching team which best matches their area of expertise (e.g. clinical epidemiology, diagnosis, randomised controlled trials etc). As appropriate, research students will then have the opportunity to contribute to the different activities of that teaching team: lectures, practicals, revision of teaching materials and setting of exam questions. In addition, students with a broad knowledge of evidence based practice may be able to contribute to the critical appraisal exercises, and to the SSC tutorials.

### **3. Postgraduate short courses**

Opportunities are available to help out (unpaid) during the tutorial sessions of these courses (where applicable) for people who would like to take the opportunity to gain some teaching experience. A list of short courses is available on the departmental website. Anybody interested in helping out with tutorials on a given short course should contact the course administrator whose name will be at the top of the course description on the website.

**Thesis Information see:**

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cms/go/statutes/regs/regulations/docmasters/dissregs.html>

**Form of the dissertation**

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 Higher Degrees Office.

**Preliminary pages**

The five preliminary pages must be the Title Page, Abstract, Dedication and Acknowledgements, Author's Declaration and Table of Contents. These should be single-sided.

**Title page**

At the top of the title page, within the margins, the dissertation should give the title and, if necessary, sub-title and volume number. The full name of the author should be in the centre of the page. At the bottom centre should be the words "A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of ... in the Faculty of ... ", with the name of the department and month and year of submission. The word count (text only) should be typed at the bottom right hand side of the page.

**Abstract**

Each 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 between 10 and 12. A further copy of the abstract must be submitted separately.

**Author's declaration**

A signed declaration is required, stating how far the work contained in the dissertation is the candidate's own work and how far it has been conducted in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others. An example is given below:

*I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original, except where indicated by special reference in the text, and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for*

*any other academic award. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.*

SIGNED: ..... DATE:.....

## **Table of contents, list of tables and illustrative material**

The table of contents must list, with page numbers, all chapters, sections and subsections, the list of references, bibliography, list of abbreviations and appendices. The list of tables and illustrations should follow the table of contents, listing with page numbers the tables, photographs, diagrams etc, in the order in which they appear in the text.

## **Paper**

The dissertation must be printed on A4 white bond paper. Dot matrix printers should not be used. Paper up to A3 may be used for maps, plans, diagrams and illustrative material. Pages may be single-sided or double-sided.

## **Page numbering**

The pages should be numbered consecutively at the bottom centre of the page.

## **Text**

The text should be in double or 1.5 line spacing in a font size in the range 10 to 12, with headings no larger than 14. Quotations and footnotes should be in single spacing in a font size in the range 8 to 10. Margins at the binding side should be not less than 40mm, and other margins should be not less than 15mm.

## **Computer disks, videotape, photocopies and photographs**

Appended computer disks should be in appropriate format, in accordance with current faculty guidelines. There should be a declaration in the dissertation of the programming language used and the size of the file. Appendices may include VHS tapes or DVD, using the British standard. Good quality photocopies and photographs can be used.

## **Binding**

The initial two copies of the dissertation should be presented in a secure, temporary binding, with a glued or spiral spine and not in a ring or spring binder.

The two further copies should be hard-bound. Spine width should not exceed 50mm. Larger sheets or printed matter should be placed in a pocket inside the back cover or in a separately bound volume. The title of the dissertation should appear on the outside front cover in 18 point gold lettering. The spine must be lettered in 18 point gold lettering, with the student's initials and surname, degree, volume number (if necessary), and year of submission. This should run from the top of the spine to the bottom, so as to be readable when the volume lies flat with the top cover uppermost.

## **Examiners**

Examiners prepare a report on the dissertation to enable the Committee to assess the scope and significance of the work. For a PhD, examiners should look for evidence of training in the application of research methods appropriate to the field of study, and take into consideration the evidence of originality and independent critical power. The dissertation must make a significant original contribution.

## **Possible recommendations by examiners**

There are seven possible recommendations for the PhD.

- a) Awarded the degree unconditionally.
- b) Awarded the degree subject to correction of minor errors to the satisfaction of supervisor.
- c) Awarded the degree after referral, on correction of errors or omissions of substance and/or a satisfactory viva, to the satisfaction of the internal and/or external examiner and subsequently the Higher Degrees Examination Board
- d) Not awarded the degree, but candidate permitted to re-present the dissertation in a revised form.
- e) Not awarded the degree, and permission not to be granted to resubmit in revised form, but that the candidate be offered a Masters degree.
- f) Not awarded degree, but permission be granted to resubmit in revised form, subject to specified correction within a specified period of months, for the degree of Master instead.
- g) Not awarded the degree, and permission not to be granted to resubmit.

## **Additional information**

### **ESRC guidelines on research training for postgraduate research students**

## **Student/supervisor relationship**

“Start as master (sic) and pupil and ideally end up as almost equal colleagues” (SERC 1989)

### **Early stages**

Supervisor helps student prepare a plan of work, offers help and guidance on the topic and on a programme of reading and research. These should include a programme for reviewing the literature, finding out about relevant research techniques, checking availability of equipment, resources and people. The supervisor should arrange a regular schedule of meetings, set timetables for handing in written reports. The student will be asked to hand in written work at intervals or to prepare seminars on progress to date.

### **Later stages**

A supervisor needs to recognise that however promising the initial relationship, there are likely to be periods of tension at times. The supervisor should expect and control these situations, but it is not the supervisor's lot to just accept what comes. A conscious effort by both sides is needed to overcome it and the student needs to recognise and act on this. Sometimes it may be a good idea to bring other people into the discussions so that a wider spectrum of views and opinion is obtained.

Where possible, a student should resolve difficulties directly and swiftly with their supervisor, but if there are things that cannot be discussed directly, they should contact the Graduate Tutor

### **Writing**

This may take considerably longer than expected. Approximately 24 weeks should be allowed – if the student is well organised.

### **Further guidance for supervisors**

1. Supervisors should make it clear that students are expected to participate fully in the planning of work to be done, to question advice given to them, and to reach their own decision about what needs to be done. Supervisors should in the last resort defer to the student's decision.
2. There are two interlinked spaces of advising on research:
  - a) Ability to select problems, to stimulate and enthuse students and to provide a steady stream of ideas and guidance.

- b) To help with the mechanics of ensuring that the student makes good progress.
3. The supervisor should be prepared to give advice to the student on academic and personal problems.
4. The supervisor should help the candidate to carry on research and present the results to the best advantage.
5. The supervisor should be available to the examiners at or after the viva.

## **Further guidance for students**

### **Expenses**

Full-time students have an annual allowance for meetings and travel, depending on source of funding. Students should apply to any research body for expenses (e.g. R&D, charitable trusts etc.). All expenses must be authorised in advance by the supervisor on the department form.

### **Useful addresses**

#### *The Language Centre*

30/32 Tyndall's Park Road Tel 9741311 Fax 974 1377

This has been established to provide specialist tuition in English and other languages for academic purposes.

#### *Supervisor to overseas students*

International Centre, University Union Queen's Road Tel 9239418

The office is open between 10.00am and 4.30pm from Monday to Friday.

Help can be given about immigration, visa renewal, fees, scholarships etc.

Based at the

#### *International Centre*

Overseas Liaison 9466190

European Office 9239478

Study Abroad Office 9239159

This is where all students can obtain information and advice regarding study opportunities, international collaboration, exchange programmes, visas etc.

#### *Student Finance office*

For all information on financial matters, contact Student Finance Officer,

Student's Union, Queen's Road Tel 9238740

#### *Student Health Service*

Bruce Perry House, 25 Belgrave Road, BS8 2AA Tel 9737716/9738919

### **Useful websites**

- All regulations & forms:  
-[www.bris.ac.uk/exams/higher.html](http://www.bris.ac.uk/exams/higher.html)
- Social Medicine website:

- [www.epi.bris.ac.uk/postgrad/](http://www.epi.bris.ac.uk/postgrad/)
- UK grad courses:
- [www.grad.ac.uk](http://www.grad.ac.uk)
- University guidelines on research & misconduct
- <http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/Secretary/srrtofc.htm>
- University guidelines on student welfare
- [www.bris.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity](http://www.bris.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity)
- University Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes
- [www.bristol.ac.uk/tsu/policy/cop-research-degrees.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/tsu/policy/cop-research-degrees.html)

## Ways to gather information

1. Familiarise yourself with the libraries. Browse.
2. Find the core journals in your field and hand search time. Scan book reviews and abstracts of relevant literature.
3. Discover other journals from related fields.
4. Look for reports, theses, and government publications.
5. Find out which individuals and organisations are active in your field by using lists of current research, directories of research organisations.
6. Use abstracting journals for an overview.
7. Use citation indexes e.g. Social Science, BIDS – the lead your from known papers to others in your field.
8. Use encyclopaedias and handbooks to get information about basic problems
9. Use your supervisor to discover key references and people in the field, and contact other members of staff for the same purpose.
10. Talk to colleagues, others in the field, go to conferences and meetings to 'network'.

## The process of writing

You could use the following process:

1. Work to an outline plan
2. Write a first draft without correction
3. Edit and polish the draft
4. Redraft (may be several times) and proof read the final version

When editing your work:

1. Check that the English is good.
2. Ensure that the sequence of ideas is orderly.
3. Use shorter words.
4. Delete all unnecessary words and irrelevances

5. Avoid jargon and specialised terms where the possible –or ensure that they are well-defined.
6. Avoid repetition.
7. Check that statements are unambiguous.
8. Avoid terms with racist/sexist language, slang etc.

## **Encouraging creative ideas**

The process of creativity is often suggested to have five stages: preparation, incubation, inspirations, elaboration, and evaluation.

To ensure that you have creative ideas....

1. Relax sometimes and let your mind wander around new ideas.
2. Keep a notebook handy for ideas which arise when you are doing something else
3. Look out for opportunities and go for them.
4. If you are stuck with a problem, try to shift your viewpoint and look at it in a different way.
5. Brainstorm – write down all ideas that come into your mind. Evaluate them later

## **Bibliography**

Allen G, Skinner C (eds). *Handbook for Research Students in the Social Sciences*. Falmer Press, 1991.

Phillips EM, Pugh DS. *How to get a PhD*. OUP, Buckingham, 1994.