



**Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences
Department of Social & Policy Sciences**

**MSc Public Policy
Programme Handbook
2021/22**

This Handbook is available online on the [MSc public policy programme hub](#) or in alternative formats. Please contact mpp@bath.ac.uk if required.

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ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This is the 2021-22 Handbook for all the students on the MSc Public Policy programme in the academic year 2021/22.

The contents of this Handbook are accurate at the time of publication [October 2021] but information contained within may sometimes be subject to change after this Handbook has been issued.

The Important Links and Information section of this Handbook includes links to information online about both the topics covered in this Handbook and other key topics. It is important that you familiarise yourself with the online information as well as the contents of this Handbook.

Information about the structure of your programme (which units you take when, which units are compulsory etc), as well as key unit information (including learning outcomes, synopsis and assessment), for the upcoming academic year can be found online in the Unit and Programme Catalogues (see Error! Reference source not found. in this Handbook and HYPERLINK "http://www.bath.ac.uk/catalogues" www.bath.ac.uk/catalogues). You will also receive details about unit content and assessment via the University's online learning environment, Moodle.

You will be informed, normally by your Director of Studies or Unit Convenor, of any further changes that will affect your programme or a unit. See also **Unit and programme changes 2** in this Handbook.

You will be informed via announcements if any services offered by the University will need to be changed as a result of changing circumstances during 2021/22.

While this Handbook signposts information about regulations for students, it does not have regulatory status itself, and the Regulations available online (Regulations for Students: <http://go.bath.ac.uk/regulations> and Assessment Regulations: www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/new-framework-for-assessment) are the most up-to-date and take precedence over the contents of this Handbook. It is your responsibility to take the time to familiarise yourself with the Regulations.

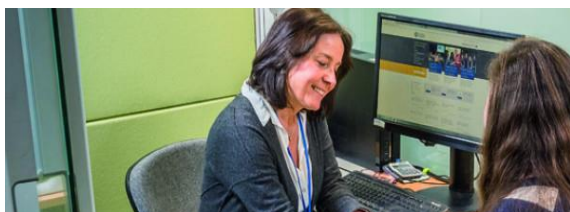
If in doubt about what applies to you, or if your circumstances change, please contact your Director of Studies, Dr Melanie Channon (M.D.Channon@bath.ac.uk) for advice.

IMPORTANT LINKS AND INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY INFORMATION ONLINE

This Handbook is an accompaniment to important information available to all students on the University's website. It is expected that you will familiarise yourself with the online information signposted below.

If you cannot find the information you are looking for in this Handbook or on the web please contact mpp@bath.ac.uk in the first instance.



Supporting You

Student Support Services

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/professional-services/student-services/>
[*Counselling and mental health support*](#)
[*Disability Service*](#)
[*Student Money Advice*](#)
[*Welfare and Wellbeing Advice*](#)

Students' Union Advice and Support Service

www.thesubath.com/advice

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

<https://www.thesubath.com/diversity-support/>

LGBTQ+ students

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/lgbtq-student-support-at-bath/>

International Students

<https://www.thesubath.com/international/>
<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/money-advice-for-international-and-eu-students/>

Disabilities, long-term illness, and specific learning difficulties

<http://go.bath.ac.uk/disability-service>

Students with caring responsibilities

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/university-and-young-adult-carers/>

Care-leavers, Estranged students and Foyer Residents

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/additional-support-and-funding-for-care-leavers-foyer-residents-and-estranged-students/>

CORE UNIVERSITY SERVICES / INFORMATION

Dissatisfaction with a University service or facility (Complaints)

www.bath.ac.uk/guides/student-complaints-policy-and-procedure

Health and Safety

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/topics/covid-19-information-for-students/>

Be Safe on Campus information (COVID-19)

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/be-safe-on-campus-and-in-bath-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Student Immigration Service

www.bath.ac.uk/topics/visas

Visa Extension Service

Academic Engagement rules for Tier 4 students

Library and Study Spaces

<https://library.bath.ac.uk/home>
www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/where-you-can-study-on-campus-and-in-the-city

Academic Skills Support and Development

www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/get-ahead-with-skills-at-bath
<http://go.bath.ac.uk/my-skills>

Learning Technologies & IT Support

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/professional-services/digital-data-and-technology/>

Careers Service

www.bath.ac.uk/professional-services/careers-service

Students from a refugee background

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/financial-support-for-refugees/>
<https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/university-and-refugees/>

Student parents (including expectant parents)

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/student-parents/>

Eurasmus and Visiting students

<https://www.thesubath.com/erasmus/>

SUPPORTING Your Learning

www.bath.ac.uk/guides/your-programme

Year dates and timetables

Blended learning (setting yourself up)

How we ensure the quality of your course, including making changes.

Regulations for students

<http://go.bath.ac.uk/regulations>

Registration

www.bath.ac.uk/guides/registering-with-the-university

Withdrawing from or suspending your studies www.bath.ac.uk/guides/suspending-your-studies-or-leaving-the-university

Placements

<http://go.bath.ac.uk/placements-information-for-students>

Personal Tutoring

www.bath.ac.uk/guides/personal-tutoring

Student Representation and Engagement

www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/student-engagement-shape-your-university

Data Protection

www.bath.ac.uk/guides/data-protection-guidance

Bullying, harassment and victimisation

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/forms/be-the-change-reporting-form/>
<https://www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/report-and-support/>

SU Code of Practice and membership

www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/code-of-practice-for-the-students-union-su

Assessment

www.bath.ac.uk/guides/assessment-guidance-for-students

Important assessment information

Coursework submission (deadlines, word counts)

Assessment processes (marking, anonymous marking, moderation, scaling)

External examiners

Understanding your results

Supplementary assessment

Academic Integrity

www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/academic-integrity-training-and-test

Assessment Regulations

www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/new-framework-for-assessment

Definitions of assessment terms

Individual Mitigating Circumstances

www.bath.ac.uk/guides/reporting-individual-mitigating-circumstances-to-the-university

Academic Appeals

www.bath.ac.uk/guides/appealing-against-an-academic-decision

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT WELCOME 2021/22

Welcome from the public policy team

Welcome to the MSc Public Policy at the University of Bath. It is an important time to be studying public policy.

Rapidly changing contexts can make it difficult to keep sight of how policy works, when, how and for whom. Policy professionals need analytical and policy tools that enable them to clearly identify options and obstacles for policy design, development and delivery.

The programme team is looking forward to working with you to learn about, and critically evaluate, developments in public policy, and to enhance your understanding of the wider contexts within which public policy is made. This means reflecting on vital questions of how power is exercised in public policy, when and how policy change emerges, and how we can understand its effects, both direct and indirect. There are opportunities to enhance your understanding of public policy in a range of fields – in and beyond those with which you are familiar. This will include the opportunity to develop skills in analysis, research and synthesis for policy-related environments.

We have a skilled, experienced and enthusiastic teaching team of public policy specialists providing the core teaching for the programme. They include political scientists, economists, policy anthropologists and sociologists, and digital specialists. All staff have their own research expertise in distinct public policy areas that informs the programme content and discussion. This might be in specific regions of the world; particular institutions and processes; or policy domains. These staff are also joined by others from across the University who will contribute their research knowledge and expertise to presentations at the residentials; and in supervising your projects.

Undertaking a master's programme, especially one that involves both online and face-to-face learning, while also working, is very much a collaborative and sometimes challenging endeavour.

New ideas and ways of thinking about public policy emerge through a combination of reading, reflection, writing, listening and questioning (both ourselves and others). This is what it means to have a 'learning community' for our programme. We all have a lot to learn from each other and the programme will work best when students share responsibility for participation. If you face problems which prevent you from participating regularly please contact your personal tutor in first instance.

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide information and guidance to help you with your studies. It covers the ethos, structure and organisation of the programme. It also contains a large amount of specific information about University and programme-level regulations. It is really important that you

understand this information and how the programme works, so please read it carefully as it should answer many of the queries that you have throughout your time on the programme.

We are sure that being a student again will be a challenge at times, but hopefully a fun and rewarding one!

We look forward to working with you.



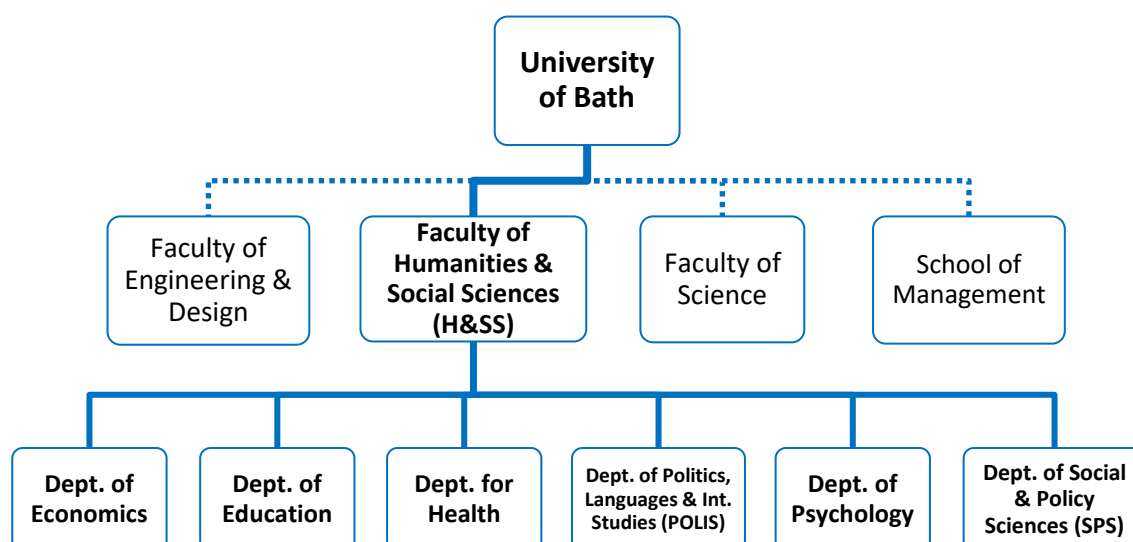
Dr Melanie Channon
Director of Studies

YOUR PROGRAMME

WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF BATH AND THE PUBLIC POLICY PROGRAMME

Welcome to the University of Bath. The MSc in Public Policy is delivered by the Department for Social and Policy Sciences within the [Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences \(HSS\)](#). The Faculty is one of three Faculties and one School in the University (see below) and comprises six academic [Departments](#).

[Economics](#), [Education](#), [Health](#), [Politics, Languages & International Politics](#), [Psychology](#) and [Social & Policy Sciences](#).



Faculty H&SS Taught Programmes administration

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught (Masters) programmes are delivered by academic staff in departments, with administrative support provided by our Taught Programmes Team. Our Taught Programmes Team consist of expert Managers, Officers, Administrators and Administrative Assistants, located in Hub Offices across our Faculty buildings – 3 East, 1 West North, 1 West and 10 West.

Our Taught Programmes Team is responsible for all aspects of administrative support for all taught programmes in the Faculty, ensuring that services are efficient, effective and adapt to changing circumstances. We provide students with support and advice from registration to graduation, and support academic teaching staff in our departments.

Our duties include:

- managing administrative processes of the Faculty's taught programmes
- acting as a central point of contact for staff and students seeking advice
- offering programme-related operational support for academic teaching staff in departments

It is important that you get to know the administrators who look after your particular programme, as they can often provide invaluable guidance on various aspects of the programme. If your administrator is unavailable then please speak to any other of our other administrators listed on our wiki page [here](#), all of whom will be very happy to help you. If you have any problems then please contact one of the Programmes Officers or Managers.

Emails are managed via shared mailboxes to deal with enquiries from students and academic staff and these are regularly monitored by designated members of the team.

Taught Programmes Support Hub

Location: 1 West North (office 3.02)

Faculty: Postgraduate Distance Learning programmes

Programmes Officers:

- [Jess McCallum](#) PGT Distance Learning programmes (Department of Education, Department for Health and Department of Social Policy and Policy Sciences)

Programme Administrator

- [Naomi Mintrum](#) Programme Administrator MSc Public Policy

MSc Public Policy: mpp@bath.ac.uk

YOUR DEPARTMENT

The MSc in Public Policy is led by the Department for Social and Policy Sciences. Core teaching staff contributing to the programme also come from the Department of Politics and International Studies, and the Department of Economics and the Institute for Policy Research.

Information regarding the department, including a list of academic staff, their individual research interests, departmental research activities and news items can be found at <http://www.bath.ac.uk/departments/department-of-social-policy-sciences/>, <http://www.bath.ac.uk/departments/department-of-politics-languages-international-studies/>, <http://www.bath.ac.uk/departments/department-of-economics/> and <https://www.bath.ac.uk/collections/institute-for-policy-research/>

YOUR KEY STAFF CONTACTS

The programme email address is: mpp@bath.ac.uk (see 'staying in touch', below).

Your Director of Studies is responsible for the overall running of the programme. You can contact her via the programme email address, or for confidential enquiries, via her personal email address.

Dr Melanie Channon
M.D.Channon@bath.ac.uk
+44 (0) 1225 384513

Unit convenor	Unit convenors design and develop content, leading students through a unit and communicating information about content, activities and assessment, facilitating discussion and ensuring that student queries are answered, co-ordination of assignment marking and provision of feedback, liaison with other academic teaching and administration staff.		
	Room	Number	Email
Unit 1. Emma Carmel	3 East 4.03	+44 (0)1225 384685	e.k.carmel@bath.ac.uk
Unit 2. Matteo de Tina	3 East 4.05	+44 (0)1225 386866	m.de.tina@bath.ac.uk
Unit 3. Donna Arrondelle	3 East 2.19	+44 (0) 1225 384579	dla25@@bath.ac.uk
Unit 4. Theo Papadopoulos	3 East 3.02B	+44 (0) 1225 384513	M.D.Channon@bath.ac.uk
Dissertations/portfolio	Dissertation supervisors will be appointed when you have progressed to the research phase of the programme. Supervision of dissertations will be provided throughout the research phase.		

YOUR PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The MSc in Public Policy comprises 4 taught units, and a research stage (dissertation or portfolio).

Each unit has a **credit tariff ('credits')**. The credit tariff relates to the approximate amount of study required for that unit.

Year 1

Unit 1: Public Policy:
politics, theory and
practice
(18 credits)

Unit 2: Public policy and
Economics
(12 credits)

Year 2

Unit 3: Evidence
knowledge and data in
public policy
(18 credits)

Unit 4: Public policy
case analysis
(12 credits)

Dissertation
OR
Portfolio
(30 credits)

DURATION OF STUDY

Candidates normally conclude the taught part of their studies within two years. There are two compulsory residentials in Bath (seven days each); and two compulsory residentials in London (three days each).

PROGRAMME AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The MSc in Public Policy has specific aims and should help students achieve specific learning outcomes. The overall programme aims and learning outcomes are set out below. In addition, each unit of the programme has its own aims and learning outcomes. These are set out in the current versions of detailed programme and unit descriptions available via the online catalogues: www.bath.ac.uk/catalogues

Overall, this programme aims to provide:

- In-depth knowledge, intellectual challenge, and practical skills in public policy, all structured to enhance part-time students' learning and professional career development.
- Comprehensive knowledge and critical understanding of standard and innovative explanations of what public policy is for, how public policies are made and delivered, and how they shape social, political and economic life.
- Advanced critical understanding of the political, economic and social dynamics that shape public policy development and outcomes in (self-chosen) specialist field(s) of public policy.
- Enhancement and deepening of students' skills in reviewing, analysing, applying and presenting data for public policy across a range of digital and non-digital formats.
- Enhancement and deepening of students' practical knowledge of issues and challenges in professional public policy work, and the elaboration of durable professional networks for continued knowledge exchange and career development.

Overall, the intended learning outcomes for students fall into three major categories: knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills; professional and practical skills.

As you go through the programme, reference will be made to these learning outcomes, and how they relate to the content, structure and learning for each unit.

a. Knowledge and understanding:

- comprehensive knowledge and critical understanding of the transformations in politics, society and political economy that shape public policy in diverse settings and cases.
- advanced knowledge of how political economy, economics, and public finances affect how public policy is organised, as well as how economic data can be critically interpreted to inform political argumentation and decision-making.
- critical and in-depth understanding of how knowledge, data and evidence are produced and the politics of knowledge production in policymaking.
- critical and in-depth knowledge of a self-chosen area of public policy that synthesises independent research and EITHER the application of public policy theory and research (dissertation pathway) OR practical policy analysis skills (portfolio pathway).

b. Intellectual skills:

- explanation and application of theoretical frameworks to public policy analysis.

- identification and analysis of relevant political, economic and social contextual conditions of public policymaking.
- design, deployment and critical interpretation of data, knowledge and evidence for political and public policy, including the use of data in digital environments
- evaluation of alternative tools and approaches for policy analysis and review, and the application of these in specific public policy cases.

AND EITHER [dissertation pathway]

- systematic review, interpretation and deployment of existing research to identify, analyse and investigate a problem in public policy analysis with reference to theories of public policy.
- rigorous, ethical and practical design and implementation of a research project to investigate a theoretical or empirical problem in public policy, including selection, integration and evaluation of appropriate theoretical framework, methods, data and analysis.
- explanation of relevant political, economic and social contextual conditions in a specific public policy case, and evaluation of findings with reference to theories of public policy.

OR [portfolio pathway]

- policy analysis and review that includes: problem identification and interpretation with reference to appropriate conceptual framework; evidence, data and knowledge assessment; policy and political argumentation; selection, application, evaluation and refinement of appropriate policymaking/analysis tools; and operationalization/delivery planning.

c. Professional/practice skills:

- using, interpreting and challenging evidence, knowledge and data from diverse sources, perspectives and paradigms in order to make a persuasive case for particular political or policy position.
- effective communication and strategic thinking both in and outside hybrid public/private policy-making environments;
- the design, develop and review options for policy and political action across these environments, including assessing their political, ethical, economic and social risks/opportunities.
- assessing dispersed and unpredictable political and economic forces, their implications for public policy development and outcomes, and develop strategic responses to these.
- development of strategies for mediating between conflicting goals to secure political agreement in a social media age.

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION: STRUCTURE OF YOUR PROGRAMME

The structure of your programme year for 2021/22 can be found in the 2021/22 Unit and Programme Catalogues (see below). The content of the Programme Catalogues is correct at the time of publication. Programmes and units may be subject to reasonable change (see **Unit and programme changes** in this Handbook).

YOUR TIMETABLE

You can use MyTimetable to create a customised programme timetable that can be downloaded into an electronic calendar: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/services/mytimetable/>

UNIT & PROGRAMME CALENDAR

A detailed programme calendar is provided on the [programme hub in Moodle](#)

Full information is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

PHYSICAL STUDY SPACE – 2021/22

As in previous years, you will be able to book study space on campus and in the city for individual or group study. Information on how to book, and the COVID-19 requirements, is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

OPTION CHOICES

If your programme has option choice then information about how and when to choose your option units can be found online (please refer to **Important Links and Information**). If applicable, you will receive an email notification at the relevant point in the year when online unit selection is available. If you need to discuss your option choices, please contact your Director of Studies.

UNIT AND PROGRAMME CHANGES 2021/22

All programme and unit changes are managed through formal University processes. This is to ensure that changes are academically appropriate, properly supported and are made in a way that safeguards the interests of students.

We continually look for ways to develop and improve our programmes, aimed at enhancing your learning experience and maintaining high academic standards and quality. Such changes could be, for example, to update content to reflect latest developments in a particular field of study, or to respond to student feedback on delivery and/or assessment. Students who would be affected by proposed changes are consulted about them, either via their Staff/Student Liaison Committee or directly, depending on the nature of the change.

In addition, it is sometimes necessary to make changes due to unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances. The need to adapt to circumstances created by the global pandemic was a significant example of this.

This could also be for reasons such as:

- the accrediting body requiring changes to be made to the course, or,
- being unable to run an option unit because too few students selected it.

When this happens, we always try to ensure that the impact on students is minimised and that those affected are informed of the changes at the earliest opportunity.

Information on how we assure the quality and standards of your programme of study is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

GIVING FEEDBACK ON YOUR PROGRAMME TO THE UNIVERSITY

The University is committed to continually improving its practice and aims to engage students as active partners in their education (Education Strategy 2016-21). The three main ways in which your feedback will be sought will be through:

- Staff / Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs)
- surveys and evaluations
- the Students' Union.

Full information is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

KEY PROGRAMME TERMINOLOGY

Moodle pages: 'Moodle' is the name of the virtual learning environment at Bath, where all online programme information is stored. It is used by academic Departments to support learning and teaching at programme and unit level. It is a platform for the delivery of resources and online activities, and can also support student interaction and collaboration. The MSc Public Policy has a set of dedicated pages in which you can find all content, additional resources and links to further information.

Learning resources hub: programme-level repository of library/writing skills/additional guides, accessible within the programme's Moodle pages

Case study library hub: programme-level repository of public policy case study materials on specific case studies.

Unit: Basic component part of the programme, with specific learning objectives and assessments. There are four taught units in the MSc Public Policy.

Block: the basic sub-division of unit content that groups topics under a common theme. Each block covers 3-6 topics and includes a webinar/online group discussion on the overall theme. Blocks may have an assessment attached.

Topic: sub-division of block. Content for the programme is mostly presented through topics & topic guides. A topic would normally cover learning and reading for two weeks.

Block guide: a pdf document introducing all the topics in a particular block, setting out key reading, and the significant questions & debates of the topic, as well as introducing additional resources, activities and links to wider reading.

Discussion forum: Each topic is completed with a discussion forum activity. This is usually structured around one or two key questions linked to reading or another resource (e.g. film). These must be completed by the set date (see programme calendar on the programme hub.) Academic staff responsible for each specialist topic will provide feedback on the forum contributions during the topic period or in the week following.

Feedback.

Students receive feedback to enhance their learning in four main ways.

1. For **each topic**, contributions to online web-forum discussions or any alternative activities, will have formative written or oral group feedback. Brief individual written feedback may be provided.
2. For **each block**, webinar contributions, & discussions, debates & presentations during residentials will involve oral feedback to the individual and group.
3. For **each unit**, summative and formative individual written feedback will be provided on assessments.
4. For **research-based work**, formative individual feedback will be provided during supervisions for case study, dissertation or portfolio.

PARTICIPATING AND CONTRIBUTING

This programme has been structured to develop a sustained and rich interactive learning community over the lifetime of the programme. Evidence shows that knowledge and understanding are fully developed in a collective interaction, rather than a didactic teaching environment.

Actively participating in all elements of the programme will contribute to the learning and educational experience of yourself, and the group as a whole.

In many cases, as part of this collective educational experience, we have students working in groups, sometimes with formal assessment.

Whilst studying a unit, we would expect you to engage with all activities, such as discussion forums and webinars.

It is also a University Regulation that you participate regularly. If you will be unable to participate in discussion forums, webinars or residentials due to ill health, then you must contact your Director of Studies as soon as possible to discuss your situation. This will enable us to take an appropriate course of action.

Special regulations apply if illness affects your ability to complete assessments. See section on Individual Mitigating Circumstances below.

STAYING IN TOUCH

Email and Moodle discussion forums are the main means of staying in touch. Here are some simple guidelines:

Do you need to access programme content, or notifications of discussion forums?

Make sure you check your University email account regularly as this is where notifications will be sent.

Do you need to access important communications from the University or teaching staff writing to you individually?

- University messages and direct message to you are sent to your email address registered in SAMIS.
- To update your email address registered on SAMIS please go to: www.bath.ac.uk/samis. You can also access your University account online by typing mail.bath.ac.uk.
- You should make a point of checking your account regularly and ensure your email inbox does not become full otherwise you run the risk of missing important information.

Do you have a query about teaching content or have a problem of understanding?

Post on the unit discussion board in Moodle, so everyone can see your query, contribute to answering it, learn and participate.

Do you have a query about the programme, or any practical, technological, regulation or assessment issues (including accessing material)?

Check the relevant sections of this Handbook. If you cannot find the answers you need, use the programme email address: mpp@bath.ac.uk

Do you have a confidential matter to discuss, or a problem with a staff member or fellow student?

Email your personal tutor or Director of Studies directly, M.D.Channon@bath.ac.uk

Do you have a problem that cannot be addressed by your personal tutor or Director of Studies?

Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook for support services, student union representatives, wellbeing advisors, as well as appeals and complaints procedures.

HOW YOUR PROGRAMME IS REVIEWED AND MONITORED

The University has in place a number of ways to ensure that programmes remain up-to-date, issues are dealt with and improvements made.

All programmes and units are monitored annually, looking at evidence for what is working well and identifying any actions that need to be taken. Taking account of student feedback, including feedback given through unit evaluation and other student surveys, is a key part of unit and programme monitoring.

Departments also conduct periodic reviews of their programmes. These provide an opportunity for in-depth review and development, involving input from students and from an adviser(s) external to the University.

ENGAGEMENT WITH UNITS

In our postgraduate taught units, we seek to create an interactive rather than a didactic teaching environment, with students actively contributing to the educational experience of the group as a whole. In many cases, as part of this collective educational experience, we have students working in groups. Sometimes assessment of which might be formal. This rich learning environment relies on students attending and participating in all activities (online or on campus).

Whilst studying a unit, we would expect you to engage with all activities (unless mitigating circumstances dictate otherwise). Non-engagement will not only reduce your own learning experience but could potentially reduce that of others in the group. We hope that you will appreciate the importance of this issue, in that students are partners in a collective learning experience.

FEES AND REGISTRATION

The tuition fees paid (see [Tuition Fees](#)) cover you for the expected duration of the programme, namely, for a part-time Postgraduate Diploma or Masters Degree programme (2 years max PG Dip, 4 years max MSc). University regulations covering payment of fees can be found [here](#).

Occasionally, students have to continue their studies beyond the expected end of the programme, into the following year. This could be due to a variety of reasons, including; an extension to the dissertation, or a student may be given the chance to resubmit a failed dissertation. The need to undertake supplementary work does not automatically guarantee that an extension is appropriate – in all cases this subject to agreement by your Director of Studies.

If an extension is granted, a further fee may need to be paid should you have to continue your studies into the following year.

Important: as soon as you reach the end of your registration, you will automatically lose your email account as well as access to the Library and other facilities. It is therefore essential that, if the above applies to you, you are re-registered for that year.

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and **Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)** are the processes by which the University recognises that a student has *either* completed a

formal course of education in an area related to their programme of study which has enabled them to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes of one or more of its units, *or* has demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes of one or more of its units through experience and practice. Specific details, including the maximum credits that can be awarded, can be found at:

<http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/cop/qastatements/QAX/QA45.pdf>

Or: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/qa45-accreditation-of-prior-and-experiential-learning-apl-and-apel/>

Specifically, and **subject to agreement by the Director of Studies/Admissions Tutor** responsible for the particular programme of study, APL and APEL can **ONLY be arranged at the beginning of the semester** in which the specified units run – under no circumstances can these be considered once any form or assessment has been taken.

STUDY AND SUPPORT: GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR STUDIES

YOUR STUDENT RECORD: SAMIS

SAMIS is the University's student records database. It provides an online portal where you can view details about your registration, update your contact details, and do other things such as viewing exam information, viewing your confirmed assessment results, and (where applicable) choosing optional units.

Further information

<https://samis.bath.ac.uk>

MOODLE

Moodle is the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) used at the University of Bath. It is used by academic Departments to support learning and teaching at programme and unit level. It provides a platform for the delivery of resources and online activities, and can also support student interaction and collaboration. This is the primary learning platform for the MSc Public Policy programme.

The information contained on Moodle is **extremely important** and you are strongly recommended to check these pages regularly for updates. Moodle can be accessed by anyone with a University of Bath username and password without the need for training. You can access this information from any PC at the University or elsewhere.

Programme-specific pages including forms, instructions for coursework submissions, dissertation requirements, dissertation supervision guidelines, marking guidelines and links to other resources can be found at MPP online.

Induction: The online **Induction Unit** and the associated **Induction Event** aim to prepare students for the academic, technical and social demands of their programme of study. We recommend that all students participate in the Induction Unit prior to beginning their programme of study, and that students make every effort to attend the on-campus Induction Event.

To get started, go to: <https://moodle.bath.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=57927>

Watch the animation 'A brief introduction to Moodle and this unit', and have a look at the Moodle pages for one of your first units.

Key Programme Materials and links to other resources can be found on the Programme's Moodle Home page.

Further information

MSc Public Policy Moodle [page](#)

PERSONAL TUTORING

When you join the University, you will be assigned a Personal Tutor who will help you to get the best out of your university experience. Your Personal Tutor will:

- support you in your academic progress and personal development
- discuss with you programme choices, placement opportunities and future career plans
- provide you with a reference for your placement or career
- guide you to sources of expert help with any personal/welfare issues.

For further details on Personal Tutoring please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

If you should have reason to wish to change your Personal Tutor, please contact your Director of Studies to discuss the matter.

ASSESSMENT

Full information is available Moodle for each unit. For signposts to important information on many aspects of assessment, please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

Formal assessment of the Programme is made through written assignments and the dissertation project.

Unit Assessment

Each unit is assessed individually. The assignments are delivered and must be submitted online and the formative assessment includes moderated online discussions and feedback on essay plans.

Summative assessment will vary between units but will typically include some of the following:

- Essays
- Case studies
- Group presentations
- Blog posts
- Contribution to web discussion forums

In order to successfully complete the unit, you must gain 40% or above in each summative assessment, unless otherwise stated.

Details on how to submit coursework can be found on [Moodle](#).

Students are reminded that it is the student's responsibility to submit their assignments online in the appropriate location by the due date, unless an extension has been discussed with the Director of Studies prior to the due date.

Full details regarding the rules of assessment can be found in the Programme Regulations.

FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS ON ASSESSMENT

During your programme, you will receive feedback on assessed work. Feedback on assessments may take different forms, depending on your subject and the type of assessment. You will be informed of the timing and nature of the feedback you will receive on each assessment, including whether the piece of work itself will be returned to you. For formal written examinations, students may receive general feedback to the group rather than individual feedback. You can discuss feedback you receive on assessments alongside your performance and progress in your studies at meetings with your Personal Tutor.

Students will receive formal feedback after submission of each summative assessment. This is normally received within three weeks of the assessment submission deadline. Informal

feedback and guidance is provided by unit convenors and students should also contact unit convenors in the first instance if they have any concerns regarding feedback for an assignment. Students are also encouraged to discuss feedback received on written assignments with their personal tutor or Director of Studies.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: REFERENCING AND PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the use of any published or unpublished work without proper acknowledgement in your references. Plagiarism occurs when a student 'borrows' or copies information, data, or results from an unacknowledged source, without quotation marks or any indication that the presenter is not the original author or researcher.

Another form of plagiarism (and hence cheating) is auto-plagiarism or self-plagiarism. This occurs when a student submits work (whether a whole piece or part of a piece) without acknowledging that they have used this material for a previous assessment.

If you use someone else's work – say, by summarising it or quoting from it – you must reference the original author. This applies to all types of material: not only text, but also diagrams, maps, tables, charts, and so on. Be sure to use quotation marks when quoting from any source (whether original or secondary). Fully reference not only quotations, but also paraphrases and summaries. Such references should then be included in a bibliography or reference list at the end of the piece of work. Note that the need for referencing also applies to web-based material; appropriate references according to the type of work or image should always be given.

There are several acceptable styles for referencing material, within two general systems: Name/date (e.g. Harvard) and Numeric. **Ask your Director of Studies or Personal Tutor for further information and advice on the referencing style used on your programme.**

Guidance on referencing and plagiarism is available through skills training run by the University and the Students' Union, as well as online resources. Information guides and style sheets are available from the Library, and your Subject Librarian will be able to help with any questions.

The University has a wide range of resources available to you to help you understand academic integrity and enhance your academic writing and practice.

When you submit an assessment, you will be expected to make a declaration that the work is your own and, where you have re-used your own work and/or used other sources of information, that you have referenced the material appropriately. The University uses a plagiarism detection service (currently Ouriginal), which searches the web and databases of reference material and content submitted by other students, to identify duplicated work. Where practical, all summative assessment is submitted to this service to check for similarities as an initial indicator of whether work has been plagiarised and an assessment offence committed.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

You will be informed of the deadline to submit your assessment via the unit page on Moodle.

LATE SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK

To ensure fairness to all students, you will be expected to hand in all assessed coursework and dissertations/projects by a specified date and time, and there are penalties for submitting work after the specified deadline. If there are valid circumstances preventing you from meeting a deadline, your Director of Studies may grant you an extension to the specified submission date. Details on how to request an extension are on the unit pages on Moodle.

WORD COUNTS

Written coursework tasks will normally have a word range or limit. This is in order to give an indication of the depth and detail of work required, and to ensure that students' submitted work is comparable. You will be required to declare the word count for your work when submitting it for assessment.

If you do not observe the given word range or limit for the coursework task, for example if you exceed the word limit, then a penalty will be applied. The penalty that would apply should be stated in writing when the assignment task is distributed. You should take note of what is included when calculating the total word count (e.g. whether or not contents pages, appendices, footnotes, bibliographies and other elements that are not part of the main text are included).

You should check with your Director of Studies if you have questions about word counts and penalties.

Word limits will be published with each assessment and must be adhered to.

Your programme has adopted the University's default policy for non-compliance with the word limit or word range in accordance with QA16

(www.bath.ac.uk/quality/documents/QA16.pdf) as below:

- The marker(s) will stop reading the work once the student has exceeded a word limit (or the upper figure of a word range) by 10%. If a student writes less than the word limit (or the lower figure of a word range) they risk not maximising their potential mark;
- For the purpose of calculating the word count, footnotes are included, whereas contents pages, executive summaries, tables, figures, appendices and reference lists/bibliographies are excluded.

FEEDBACK ON ASSESSMENT

During your course, you will receive feedback on your assessed work. This feedback may take different forms, depending on the subject and type of assessment. You will be informed of the timing and nature of the feedback you will receive on each assessment, including whether the piece of work itself will be returned to you. For exam-type assessment, you may receive general feedback relevant to all who took the assessment

rather than individual feedback. You can discuss feedback you receive on assessments alongside your performance and progress in your studies at meetings with your Personal Tutor.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University has a wide range of resources available to you to help you understand academic integrity and enhance your academic writing and practice.

It also has in place an Academic Integrity Test you are required to take and pass (the pass mark is 85% but you can take the test as many times as you need to). You will not be able to progress beyond the next progression point in your studies until you pass this test.

When you submit assessment, you will be expected to make a declaration that the work is your own and, where you have re-used your own work and/or used other sources of information, that you have referenced the material appropriately. The University uses a plagiarism detection service (currently Ouriginal), which searches the web and databases of reference material and content submitted by other students, to identify duplicated work. Where practical, all summative assessment is submitted to this service to check for similarities as an initial indicator of whether work has been plagiarised and an assessment offence committed.

Submission of your assessment to the Plagiarism Detection Service - Data Protection statement

The Plagiarism Detection Service (Ouriginal) complies with European Data Protection legislation. When you registered with the University, you gave it permission to process your personal data for a variety of legitimate purposes. This includes allowing the University to disclose such data to third parties for purposes relating to your studies. The University, at its sole discretion, may submit the work of any student to the Plagiarism Detection Service (in accordance with Regulation 15.3e) and may make, or authorise third parties to make, copies of any such work for the purposes of:

- 1) assessment of the work
- 2) comparison with databases of earlier work or previously available works to confirm the work is original
- 3) addition to databases of works used to ensure that future works submitted at this institution and others do not contain content from the work submitted.

The University will not make any more copies of your work than are necessary, and will only retain these for so long as remains necessary, for these purposes.

Please note that, if at any time the University submits any of your work to the Plagiarism Detection Service, the service will be provided with, and will retain, certain personal data relating to you – for example, your name, email address, programme details and the work submitted. Such data may be transferred by the Plagiarism Detection Service to countries worldwide (some of which may not be governed by EU data legislation) in order for the work to be checked and an originality report generated in accordance with the proper workings of the Plagiarism Detection Service. Personal data is retained indefinitely by the

Plagiarism Detection Service upon submission of work. You may ask for your personal data to be removed by contacting the University's Data Protection Officer.

Assessment offences – penalties

Any student who is found to have used unfair means in an assessment procedure will be penalised. 'Unfair means' here include cheating, fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, unfair collaboration or collusion. Penalties for use of unfair means may include failure of the assessment unit or part of a degree, with no provision for reassessment or retrieval of that failure. Proven cases of plagiarism or cheating can also lead to an Inquiry Hearing or disciplinary proceedings. Claims of inadvertence or ignorance will not be accepted as a basis for mitigation of a penalty.

If you are accused of an offence, the Students' Union's welfare services are available to support you. You have the right to appeal against the outcome of the investigation.

Important information on academic integrity, the Plagiarism Detection Service, assessment offences and penalties, and support, as well as the Academic Integrity Test itself, is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

Further information

For a range of skills and development opportunities see: <http://go.bath.ac.uk/skills>

Library referencing resources, including style sheets:

www.bath.ac.uk/library/infoskills/referencing-plagiarism

Students' Union Skills Training: thesubath.com/skills-training

IF CIRCUMSTANCES IMPACT ON YOUR ASSESSMENT ATTEMPT

Individual Mitigating Circumstances (IMCs) are the conditions which temporarily prevent you from undertaking assessment or significantly impair your performance in assessment. As such, the measure of their severity is not about impact on you, but the impact on your affected assessment. Full information about IMCs is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook. **It is strongly advised that you become familiar with the available guidance and related regulations.**

ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

Assessment and marking processes at the University are designed to ensure that assessment of your work is fair and consistent, and that academic standards are appropriate and comparable between the University and other higher education institutions. This is achieved in a number of ways.

Marking: Assessments you will complete during your programme are marked according to:

- *marking criteria (or assessment criteria)* - these are the knowledge, understanding and skills which it has been identified that students should demonstrate in the

assessment and which are taken into account during marking. They are based on the learning outcomes being assessed

- *marking schemes* - these are detailed descriptions of how specific numbers of marks should be assigned against individual components of an answer within the assessment task
- *grade descriptors* - these are descriptions of the levels of achievement required in order to get a result within a given band of marks (e.g. 70% or more).

Anonymous marking: The University has adopted a principle of anonymous marking in order to protect students and staff from bias, and the perception of bias, in the marking process. It applies to all assessment where practicable. It is not possible to mark all coursework anonymously as in some types of assessment the student can be easily identified by the marker (e.g. presentations, group work, laboratory work) or it might not be practical, or in the student interest, to do so. You will be informed when your coursework is to be marked anonymously.

Moderation: Both the setting and the marking of assessments are independently checked through a process known as moderation to ensure that questions test the learning outcomes and are set at the right standard, and that marking is consistent and fair. Moderation is conducted by internal examiners and also by your External Examiner (see below).

Boards of Examiners: Assessment decision-making at the University is the responsibility of Boards of Examiners established at three levels: assessment outcomes go first to *Boards of Examiners for Units*, then *Boards of Examiners for Programmes*, then finally to *Boards of Studies*. Boards of Studies confirm decisions relating to student progression from one stage of the programme to the next and the final award. **The assessment marks you are given initially by markers are therefore provisional up until the point when they have been confirmed by the Board of Studies for your programme.** An official release date is set when your confirmed results will be made available to you via SAMIS (the University's student records system). An academic appeal can only be made in relation to a confirmed result (see the section in this Handbook on **Academic Appeals**).

Scaling: All marks for a unit are reviewed at a meeting of a Board of Examiners for Units which will verify that the assessment process has been conducted appropriately and that the marks are an accurate reflection of the standards achieved. A Board of Examiners can decide to recommend a change to the provisional marks, based on evidence that there was a problem with the assessment which means the initial marks do not reflect the standards achieved by students. This adjustment is known as scaling and under these circumstances the marks of all affected students will be changed.

External Examiner: An External Examiner is someone from another University or professional organisation who is qualified and experienced in the field of study. At least one External Examiner is appointed for each programme or group of programmes. The role of External Examiner is an important one in assuring that assessment processes are fair, academic standards are appropriate, and supporting the development of your programme. External Examiners review draft assessment and samples of assessed work, and attend Boards of Examiners. They are members of Boards of Examiners.

Once a year, the External Examiners will provide a written report. University staff, including the Head of Department and Director of Studies, will look at these reports and a response will be made to the External Examiner's comments. External Examiner reports and responses are made available to students. Staff/Student Liaison Committees (SSLCs) also discuss External Examiner reports as part of routine monitoring activity.

The External Examiner for your programme is [Dr Noemi Lendvai-Bainton](#), School for Policy Studies at the University of Bristol.

It is not appropriate for students to make direct contact with External Examiners. If you are dissatisfied with the process or outcome of an assessment, and are considering whether to raise this either informally or formally, the sections of this Handbook on **Academic Appeals** and **Dissatisfaction with a University Service or Facility (Complaints)** give some more information about the University's procedures for student complaints and academic appeals. The University's mechanisms for student representation are designed to enable students to engage with the quality management process through which the University considers and responds to External Examiners' comments and suggestions.

Full information is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

The University's New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phases 2 & 3 for postgraduate taught programmes ('NFAAR-PGT') specifies the rules governing students' progression from one stage of their programme to the next as well as for the award of degrees. The rules cover all areas of assessment, including supplementary assessment and the extent to which failure may be condoned.

If at any time you are in doubt about how NFAAR-PGT provisions apply to your work, please consult your Director of Studies.

This section highlights areas of the University's assessment framework for the type of programme you are undertaking. It explains the regulations that govern your assessment and outlines how the University makes decisions concerning your progression through your programme and award. Complete information is available in the NFAAR-PGT document.

The full NFAAR-PGT, and definitions of terms used in it, are available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

YOUR PROGRAMME AND HOW YOU ARE ASSESSED

Within your programme of study, all unit are *compulsory units*, (i.e. those units in a programme which must be taken by every student registered on the programme),

The following points will help you to understand how the assessment rules relate to your specific programme, such as pass marks, averaging of marks and dealing with any failures:

Firstly, there are several references below to the persistent generic rules on the extent of any failures of units permitted overall. The rules are that you can only (1) fail and retrieve units, or (2) marginally fail units and have them condoned, within set limits. Breaking these rules results in failure of the programme.

- Your programme does not have any Designated Essential Units (DEUs).
- Your programme is divided into stages and follows the general principle that all stage assessment must be successfully completed before progression to the next stage is permitted. This means that, if you are required to undertake supplementary assessment, you will have to do so before you can progress further. You must also never break one of the persistent generic rules.
- Your programme has units that constitute the Taught Stage(s) Credits in a separate phase before the period in which you will do the Dissertation/Project type unit(s), as indicated in the table showing the structure of your programme. The Programme Progression Requirement to get from the taught phase to the Dissertation/Project phase is 50%.
- Should you fail to qualify for the award of the degree of Master, you may be considered for the award of a related Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate (subject to your having met the requirements for one of those awards).

The normal pass mark for a unit is 40%. In some units, you might need to achieve a threshold mark in one or more component assessments in order to pass the unit overall. Particular rules apply to failure of units of the 'Taught type', or in the 'taught' stages. They are as follows:

- If you fail any units badly (i.e. achieve less than 35%), you will have to undertake supplementary assessment – unless you have failed so many units that you fail outright or the attempted retrieval would break the rule on how much failure can be retrieved.
- If you only fail units marginally (i.e. achieve 35%-39%), you might be able to progress without supplementary assessment. Whether you do progress will depend on the total credit value of the failed units.

Dissertation/Project units have their own special rule on failure: only cases of marginal failure (i.e. 35%-39%) will be given permission for attempted retrieval through supplementary assessment, and any resubmission that is permitted for marginal failure must be made within a specified period. Ultimately, you must pass a Dissertation/Project unit (or have an average of at least 40% for them if there are more than one) for satisfactory completion of the requirements for Dissertation/Project elements.

Your unit results are combined as follows to make overall assessment/award decisions:

- The Taught Stage(s) Average (TSA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the taught stage(s), or by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units defined as of 'Taught type' required to contribute to the programme.
- The Dissertation/Project Average (DPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) required to contribute to the Dissertation/Project stage(s), or by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for the unit(s) defined as of 'Dissertation/Project type' required to contribute to the programme.
- The Overall Programme Average (OPA) will be calculated by taking the credit-weighted average of marks for all units required to contribute to the programme.

A Board of Examiners will decide at appropriate points whether you are continuing to meet the requirements for the programme (including not breaking persistent generic rules whereby you can only fail and retrieve, or marginally fail and have condoned, units within set limits), and/or whether you have met all the requirements for your target award or any alternative that might be available. The outcomes will depend on both your performance in individual units and your overall performance. Generally, if you pass each of your units, you will progress and, in due course, be recommended for an award.

If you fail units beyond certain credit values, or you fail some too badly, you might break one of the persistent generic rules whereby you can only fail and retrieve, or marginally fail and have condoned, units within set limits, and this will result in failure of the programme - without any opportunity for supplementary assessment. (Further information on supplementary assessment is provided below.)

The criteria for making awards with distinction or with merit are described in the relevant NFAAR-PGT rules (paras. 78-80).

Supplementary assessment

'Supplementary assessment' is the term normally used for an opportunity given to a student to retrieve failure before starting the next stage of a programme, or by the end of the programme if it is a single-stage programme or the failed units are not Stage Required Units (SRUs).

Academic year dates, including the supplementary assessment period, can be found online. See **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

Each unit's method of supplementary assessment is shown in the online Unit Catalogue.

More information on arrangements for the 2020/21 academic year will be provided via the University webpages and updated as necessary.

At supplementary assessment, students will normally have the opportunity to gain credit for units then successfully passed and to have the mark gained reported to them for feedback

purposes, but a maximum mark of 40% will be awarded and used in the Overall Stage Average, the Overall Programme Average, the Taught Stage(s) Average, and any award calculation.

If you pass all your supplementary assessments, you will be able to progress onto the next stage of your programme and/or, as appropriate, be considered for an award. If you do not pass them all, the outcome will depend on your overall performance including consideration of the rules about passing particular types of units and the persistent generic rules (as set out above).

ACADEMIC APPEALS

If you wish to submit a request for an academic appeal you should refer to Regulation 17 (Conduct of Student Academic Reviews and Appeals), which outlines the process and grounds for an appeal against formal Board of Studies decisions.

You are also strongly advised to read the online guidance on Appeals provided by the Academic Registry.

Independent advice about academic appeals is offered by the Students' Union Advice and Support Centre.

Full information is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

CORE UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS

All registered students of the University are subject to the University's Regulations for Students. The Regulations contain rules and other important information about being a student at the University of Bath, including regulations governing the payment of fees due to the University, student discipline, fitness to study and those governing attendance, conduct and progress in studies. They also form part of the formal contract between you and the University. **You are strongly advised to read them carefully as they contain a lot of important information.**

For a link to the full Regulations for Students, see **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

ACCESSING UNIVERSITY EMAIL

You will need to use your University username and password to access your University email account. Your username also forms your email address (**username@bath.ac.uk**).

The University will often communicate with you about a range of important matters requiring action from you, including registration, assessment, degree ceremonies, and matters such as tuition fees, via your University email account. It is a University regulation that you access your University email account regularly, even if you are out on placement or study abroad. You will also be expected to communicate with the University via your University email account.

You therefore have a responsibility to ensure that your University email account can receive incoming mail and that you read your email regularly.

Once you graduate or withdraw from your course, you will receive an email stating exactly when your account will be closed. The email will give at least 30 days' notice.

STUDENTS' UNION MEMBERSHIP

All students registered with the University are automatically given membership of the Students' Union; however you have the right not to be a member. Information on opting out of this membership, and the Code of Practice for the Students' Union, are available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

DATA PROTECTION

The University's Data Protection Policy and Guidelines on Data Protection may be accessed via the data protection website (see **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook).

REGISTRATION STATUS

Note that only registered students may use the University's facilities, such as Moodle and the Library. You will be asked to register online at the start of your programme of study and then to re-register at the start of every academic year thereafter until you have completed your programme. It is a requirement that you register when asked to do so. Tuition fees for each academic year are payable at registration in full or in instalments.

Regulation 1.1 explains the requirement to register. Regulations 2.4 and 2.10 explain the consequences of non-payment of tuition fees.

ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT MONITORING FOR STUDENT AND TIER 4 HOLDERS

Guidance and requirements on academic engagement for students who are Student and Tier 4 visa holders, including the University's **Academic Engagement Monitoring Policy for Student and Tier 4 visa holders**, and information on when and how to request an authorised absence, are available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.

CHANGE IN YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES

It is important to ensure that the University holds your correct, up-to-date, personal and academic details within SAMIS, the University's student records database. If you change your address – either your semester-time or home address – please update your details online (see **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook).

If you change your name, you will need to provide valid proof of the change. Please speak to your Department or Faculty/School administration, or Student Services, for advice on how to do this.

If you are considering suspending your studies, transferring from one programme to another, or withdrawing from your programme, please discuss your situation with your Director of Studies. They will be able to advise you on an appropriate course of action.

The financial implications of withdrawing from the University or suspending your studies can be significant. See Important Links and Information in this Handbook.

The Student Money Advice Team in Student Services and the Student Finance Office will be able to advise you on the implications for fees in your situation and on how to suspend any student funding you are receiving.

If you are an international student holding a Student or a Tier 4 visa, you should consult the advisers in the Student Immigration Service about the implications of suspending or withdrawing from your programme. See Important Links and Information in this Handbook.

You will need to register any change of academic circumstance, including a change of optional units, with the University. Please speak to your Department or Faculty/School administration who will advise you on how to do this.

DISSATISFACTION WITH A UNIVERSITY SERVICE OR FACILITY (COMPLAINTS)

We want to ensure that, if you have a problem concerning the University, it is resolved as quickly as possible. The University is committed to continuing review and improvement, and seeks regular feedback from students. There are student representatives on the University's formal decision-making committees who can raise issues so that they can be dealt with promptly. The University is also committed to providing an environment within which students are encouraged to raise any matters of concern in an informal manner as soon as they arise. This often removes the need for formal complaints.

It is expected that most complaints can be resolved at an early stage by discussing the matter informally at a local level. If you have a problem concerning the University, you should bring the matter to the attention of an appropriate member of staff, who will aim to resolve it by informal discussion. If you have attempted to resolve matters informally but are not satisfied with the outcome, you may elect to proceed to the next stage by submitting a formal complaint. You may also submit a formal complaint if the issue involved is too complex or serious for informal resolution.

If you do need to make a complaint, there are procedures in place to deal with it, outlined in the University's **Student Complaints Procedure**. These procedures are designed to ensure that your complaint will be dealt with in good faith and that you will not be penalised for complaining.

There are separate procedures for requesting a review of progression or award classification decisions. See the section in this Handbook on **Academic Appeals**.

The University recognises that making a complaint can be stressful. Students are therefore advised to seek advice and support before making a complaint, from Student Services, or from the Students' Union Advice and Support Centre, whose advice is independent of the University.

Full information is available online. Please refer to **Important Links and Information** in this Handbook.