

Doctoral College



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

**Guidance on Recruitment and Admissions
Policy and Procedures
Academic Year 2018-19**

Contents

	page
1. Purpose of this document	3
2. Policies and regulations	3
3. Entry requirements	4
4. Roles and responsibilities	4
5. How to apply	6
6. Tuition fees, Training Support Fee and funding	6
7. Student immigration	7
8. Academic review, interview and decision	7
9. Offers to applicants	9
10. Enrolment	9
11. Visiting Postgraduate Scholars	9

1. Purpose of this document

This document is intended to give guidance to academic staff on the principles, policies and procedures related to applications for postgraduate research programmes, including PhD, MPhil, Integrated PhDs and Professional Doctorates.

This reflects the Doctoral College's commitment to maintaining high standards in recruitment and admissions and ensuring that the University's selection procedures and decision-making are transparent, non-discriminatory and conducted fairly and consistently across the institution.

2. Policies and regulations

Admissions for higher degrees are governed by the University's Regulation 16, which may be found at: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/regulations/Regulation16.pdf>

The University's Quality Assurance Code of Practice also applies, specifically QA22: Recruitment, selection and admission of students: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/quality/documents/QA22.pdf> and QA31: Recruitment and support for international students: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/quality/documents/QA31.pdf>

The University's quality code is informed by the national QAA Quality Code, Chapter B2: Recruitment Selection and Admission and Chapter B11: Research Degrees, which may be found at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code>

The terms and conditions that apply to postgraduate offers are available here: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/postgraduate-offer-terms-and-conditions/>

The University's IP Policy also applies to research degree outputs: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/university-secretary/legal/copyright/intellectual-property-policy.html>

3. Entry requirements

Academic and English language entry requirements can be found on individual programme pages. An overview of English language requirements may be found at: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/english-language/index.html>

Please avoid making assumptions about the equivalency of overseas qualifications. The Doctoral College will check this using the online [NARIC](#) database.

In certain circumstances an academic assessment of English ability can be made. A number of aspects can be considered, including previous study in the UK or in a majority English speaking country, and a potential supervisor's assessment. Care must be taken, especially if a visa is required. Please discuss any issues with the Doctoral College team.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Doctoral College

The Doctoral College Recruitment Team deals with all doctoral admissions enquiries received from prospective applicants, applicants, offer holders, staff and funders.

The full list of Doctoral College support contacts may be found at:

<http://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/doctoral-college-support-contacts/>

When applications are received, the team will check that we have all relevant documents, including:

- certificates and transcripts;
- research proposal (if not applying for a defined project);
- personal statement;
- CV;
- academic references;
- proof of English language ability, where necessary.

The team will liaise with the applicant to obtain any missing documentation and appraise the application form together with the documents to check that the University and programme entry requirements can be met. Where the applicant's fee status is unclear, further information will be sought from the applicant and an assessment completed to determine the correct status.

Once the initial appraisal has been completed, *provided that it meets the university's minimum entry requirement*, the team will send an email to the relevant academic staff summarising the key points of the application. The full application and

supporting documents will be made available via SAMIS on the Web. Academics who do not have access to applications via SAMIS on the Web, should email their Doctoral College contact (see below) who will arrange this with Computing Services.

Applications which do not meet the University's minimum entry requirement and do not quote a supervisor's name will be rejected. Where a potential supervisor is named in the application, the Doctoral College will make contact before issuing the rejection.

Doctoral College Contacts:

For applicants: doctoraladmissions@bath.ac.uk

For academic colleagues:

dc-admissions-engineering@bath.ac.uk

dc-admissions-hss@bath.ac.uk

dc-admissions-management@bath.ac.uk

dc-admissions-science@bath.ac.uk

When making an enquiry, please quote the student's application number, which is allocated when they make an application.

Faculty and Department roles

Deans and Associate Deans for Research are involved with making internal funding allocations.

Directors of Studies and Admissions Tutors coordinate the review of applications in their area and have an advisory role for new academic staff.

Potential Supervisors are responsible for assessing the quality and suitability of applicants.

5. How To Apply

The Doctoral College's guidance on how to apply via the online application system is available at: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/how-to-apply-for-doctoral-study/> Home/EU applicants should complete a full application at least six weeks before they intend to start. Overseas applicants should apply at least three months before they intend to start. All applications must be complete and are subject to review and appraisal and all offers to study and for funding must be made formally via the Doctoral College.

Normally, potential students are advised to make contact with an academic working in their area of research to discuss an advertised project, or one that the student has devised for themselves, before making an application.

Defined projects are advertised on Findaphd.com and/or Jobs.ac.uk Some funding competitions have bespoke procedures where dialogue with a potential supervisor may take place after an application is made.

Applicants may search academic profiles available via the [Pure](#) portal or the webpages of Departments and Research Centres.

6. Tuition fees, Training Support Fee and funding

Tuition Fees

Full and part-time fees for postgraduate research tuition fees are listed here: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/topics/tuition-fees/>

Training Support Fee

In some Departments an additional fee for training support (also known as a bench fee) may be charged to cover direct costs such as training, consumables and conference attendance.

The TSF may not always be applicable and the amount charged is variable. Please ask the Doctoral College about the banding for TSF. Please note that some external sponsors place a cap on the amount of TSF they are willing to support.

The amount of TSF should be detailed in the offer letter to the applicant with a breakdown of the costs. Further information is available at:

<http://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/writing-up-and-training-support-fees-for-postgraduate-students/>

Funding

Information for applicants on how to find funding is available at the Doctoral College website <http://www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/find-funding-for-doctoral-research/>

The Research and Innovation Service (RIS) offers a guide for academics on How To Find Research Funding Opportunities at <http://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/find-research-funding-opportunities/>

If a supervisor wishes to advertise a funded project they must first confirm the source of funding with the Doctoral College recruitment team. It is important that, if a contract with an external funder is not yet in place at the time the offer is made, we have a letter from the funder clearly outlining their funding commitment.

7. Student immigration

Advice and information on applying for a visas and CAS and to the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) are provided by the University's Student Immigration Service (SIS) at: www.bath.ac.uk/groups/student-immigration-service/

Only the SIS team are qualified to give advice on immigration matters.

8. Academic review, interview and decision

It is important that an objective assessment is made of all applications and that an auditable trail is kept of all decisions made. This is generic guidance and it does not replace any specific interview guidance related to certain funding competitions.

The application and accompanying documents, including references, are reviewed by the Department's Director of Studies, or Admissions Tutor, and the potential supervisor, who will decide if they wish to take the applicant forward for interview or to reject at this stage.

Interview

Supervisors must interview applicants before making a decision on whether or not they should be offered a place.

Ideally, interviews should be conducted by a selection panel of the potential supervisor with at least one academic who is independent of the proposed supervisory team, e.g. the relevant Director of Studies, Admissions Tutor, Faculty Director of Doctoral Studies, or another colleague experienced in doctoral supervision.

Guidance on interviewing for doctoral studies will be made available and training is recommended.

Interviews should be used to explore:

- the applicant's academic ability;
- their English language skills;
- their motivation for studying at Bath;
- their suitability and interest in the project or research area;
- the applicant and supervisor's shared view of how the project will progress;
- their ability to fit in to the lab or group in which they will be based;
- if there are likely to be any issues that the applicant wants to highlight.

Questions should not be asked about:

- anything that could be interpreted by the applicant as having a sexual, racial, social, political, gender, age or religious bias, e.g. childcare arrangements, marital, financial and/or parental status, ethnic origin;
- which other HEIs / courses the applicant has applied for;
- an applicant's disability.

The applicant should be given the opportunity to ask questions of their own.

Interviews should normally be conducted face-to-face, but where this is not possible, especially for applicants based overseas, video conferencing, eg Skype, should be used.

The lead supervisor should arrange the interview directly with the applicant and the Doctoral College informed when the interview is due to take place and, following the interview, its outcome.

Interviewers must not make any offer of a place to a potential student. This must be done via a formal offer letter from the Doctoral College.

Decisions

Following the interview, the panel chair will complete a decision sheet to record the interview outcome with notes commenting on each of the key criteria, along with any conditions attached, and return this to the Doctoral College recruitment team before a formal offer of a place can be considered.

Where concerns have been identified these must be addressed, giving an outline of a plan for how the student will be given additional support where necessary.

9. Offers to applicants

The offer letter specifies the programme, start date, duration, mode of study, supervisors, fees, and funding for the student and project. Offers may be unconditional or made conditional, e.g. on achieving a level of qualification or an English language test score.

Offer letters are emailed to the applicant via the online Application Tracker.

The offer letter is a formal legal contract between the University and the student, and once it is issued we cannot easily withdraw it. Supervisors need to be committed to taking on the student before they agree to an offer being released.

For overseas applicants there may also be a need for ATAS, a CAS and a visa, which are applied for following the offer stage.

Deferral of a student's start date can be agreed, but normally only one deferral is permitted, after which an applicant must reapply.

10. Enrolment

Prior to arrival, offer holders must accept or decline their offer on the Applicant Tracker. Please keep the Doctoral College informed of any changes of which you are aware.

To complete registration the student will be required to register online, present original documents for checking, pay fees and sign any studentship agreement.

They will be invited to attend induction and welcome events hosted by the Doctoral College and/or their Faculty, Department or Research Centre.

11. Visiting Postgraduate Scholars

The Visiting Postgraduate Scholar (VPS) scheme offers exceptional students undertaking doctoral studies at institutions in the UK and other countries the opportunity to conduct some of their research in Bath. The scheme recognises that our facilities and expertise may be of value to research students elsewhere and that we in turn may benefit from having these students undertake a proportion of their research at Bath.

The VPS scheme exempts selected research students from the payment of tuition fees for up to four months. Any registration beyond four months will normally require payment of tuition fees on a pro rata basis at the appropriate rate.

Before they apply, the VPS candidate is expected to have discussed their project with a potential supervisor at Bath. The support of their Head of Department is also required in writing before they are invited to apply online. There may be a lengthy timeline to complete the recruitment process.

Potential supervisors should not make offers to applicants. Once the Doctoral College is satisfied the application is complete, the formal offer can be processed.