



# **Policy for Admission and Management of Postgraduate Researchers Studying in Off-campus Mode**

## Documentation Management

### Document Record

<b>Maintained by:</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>Owned by:</b>	University Education Committee
<b>Approval Date:</b>	July 2015
<b>Location of Master Document:</b>	<a href="https://intra.brunel.ac.uk/s/QSO/Team/Research%20Degrees/Policy%20for%20Admission%20and%20Management%20of%20Postgraduate%20Research%20Degree%20Students%20Studying%20in%20Off-campus%20Mode">https://intra.brunel.ac.uk/s/QSO/Team/Research Degrees/Policy for Admission and Management of Postgraduate Research Degree Students Studying in Off-campus Mode</a>

### Version Control

<b>Document Version</b>	<b>Amendments</b>	<b>Amended By</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Approved By</b>
1.2	Reformatting; minor rewording; amendments to requirement for a local recognised supervisor.	Head of Quality Assurance	Aug 2022	University Education Committee

# Policy for Admission and Management of Postgraduate Researchers Studying in Off-campus Mode

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy governs the admission and management of all postgraduate researchers registered off-campus to undertake part or all of their studies. It does not apply to those postgraduate researchers studying off-campus as part of a formal collaborative partnership with another institution where admission and management will be subject to arrangements defined as part of the partnership agreement.
- 1.2 The [University Regulations](#) and [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) apply to postgraduate researchers registered off-campus. Brunel, as the awarding body, is responsible for ensuring the quality of learning opportunities available to all postgraduate researchers.

## 2 Definitions

- 2.1 Postgraduate researchers studying off-campus fall into three categories:

Category	Descriptor
<b>Category A</b>	Postgraduate researchers who are registered as off-campus from point of admission.
<b>Category B</b>	Postgraduate researchers who transfer to authorised off-campus registration partway through their studies at Brunel.
<b>Category C</b>	Postgraduate researchers undertaking authorised off-campus fieldwork/primary research as part of their studies

### **3 Application and Admission to the University for Category A Postgraduate Researchers**

#### **Requirements for approval of applications**

- 3.1 Postgraduate researchers planning to study from the outset at a location other than the University may be considered for admission at Brunel. Each application will be considered on its merits based upon the requirements below.
- 3.2 Applicants must fulfil the criteria for admission to Brunel. Should applicants be identified as requiring compulsory pre-sessional or compulsory/optional in-session English Language support, as detailed in the [University's ELR policy for PGR students](#), care must be taken to make admission decisions based upon the applicant's ability to undertake the necessary training.
- 3.3 The application process must follow that for all postgraduate research applicants. Interviews must be conducted according to the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) and the University's [Admissions Policy](#).
- 3.4 Applicants should normally be planning to undertake their studies in an industrial/professional setting or an academic institution.
- 3.5 If the applicant intends to undertake their studies at an academic institution, a justification for why they are not able to undertake a research degree at that institution must be provided.
- 3.6 In some circumstances, applications may be approved for applicants not planning to undertake their studies in an industrial/professional setting or academic institution, however, this is considered high risk. If Colleges wish to admit an applicant in such circumstances:
- There must be a strong reason for doing so and it would need to be established that the applicant would have appropriate access to suitable resources in order to provide them with an equivalent experience to postgraduate researchers based at Brunel
  - Consultation between the College and the University's Library Services should take place prior to an offer being made to the applicant to confirm whether access to online resources can be provided, and if there is any additional cost
- 3.7 In considering applicants for research degrees who wish to study off-campus, Colleges will be responsible for assuring they are satisfied that the applicant has adequate access to the resources needed to undertake their studies. This includes gathering and recording evidence from the applicant and/or any industrial/professional setting or academic institution in which they are proposing to study before deciding whether to admit an applicant on an off-

campus basis. Such considerations should include information on the appropriateness of academic facilities, the adequacy of the arrangements for access to those facilities, health and safety, and risk. Documented evidence of the appropriateness of resources will be required, which shall, where appropriate, include evidence of the agreement of the other institution to the use of such resources.

- 3.8 Colleges will be responsible for assessing the applicant's suitability for studying on this basis. This includes assessing the applicant's motives for studying off-campus and how they plan to manage their studies. Applicants must therefore be made aware of the requirements of this Policy and the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#). This will allow applicants to make an informed judgement regarding whether they can meet the expectations of the University in relation to their responsibilities as a postgraduate researcher studying off-campus.
- 3.9 Where applicable, applications will only be approved following the prior identification and approval of a local (to the student) recognised supervisor. Formal appointment of the local recognised supervisor will take place upon admission of the student. See section 4 for further details.

#### **Admission**

- 3.10 Any offer of admission to Brunel will involve the applicant receiving the standard information provided to all individuals admitted to undertake a research degree.
- 3.11 Category A postgraduate researchers must have their course record in SITS shown as 'not here'.

### **4 Local Recognised supervisors**

- 4.1 Where appropriate, Departments may require the appointment of a local recognised supervisor for the postgraduate researcher, who would be in addition to the full supervisory team required under the University's [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#).
- 4.2 Local recognised supervisors may be required or beneficial where the postgraduate researcher would benefit from local specialist support at the industrial/professional setting or academic institution where they are based.
- 4.3 Initial informal contact (at least via email) between the proposed Principal Supervisor and the proposed local recognised supervisor should take place during the application process. This informal contact must involve the proposed local recognised supervisor being made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the supervision of a Brunel postgraduate

researcher. This preliminary contact should explore issues such as whether agreement needs to be sought from the institution where the proposed local recognised supervisor is based so that the postgraduate researcher may access facilities/resources. The proposed local recognised supervisor needs to provide their agreement in principle to acting in this capacity and carrying out their responsibilities prior to the postgraduate researcher's application being formally considered by the University.

- 4.4 Proposals for the appointment of recognised supervisors will be conducted as per the University's [Policy for Appointing Recognised Supervisors / Recognised Teachers](#).
- 4.5 The local recognised supervisor will be formally appointed once an application is approved and the admission letter sent to the postgraduate researcher.
- 4.6 Upon appointment, the local recognised supervisor will receive a communication from Quality Assurance which will include the relevant [Senate Regulation\(s\)](#) and the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#).
- 4.7 Colleges will be responsible for sharing with the supervisor any College-specific information.
- 4.8 Recognised supervisors will be appointed for the period of the student's registration.
- 4.9 Local recognised supervisors are appointed in addition to the supervisory team, and they are expected to play a full part in the support for and management of the postgraduate researcher, as detailed in the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#).

## **5 Management and Supervision of Category A Postgraduate Researchers**

- 5.1 Supervision requirements for Category A postgraduate researchers will be as per the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#).
- 5.2 Formal, recorded supervisory meetings will take place as defined in the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#). These Supervisory meetings may take place with the local recognised supervisor, but the Principal Supervisor must maintain oversight. The requirements for progression reviews must be followed, as set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and should where possible coincide with the postgraduate researcher's visits to Brunel (see paragraphs 5.3 to 5.6).

- 5.3 Category A postgraduate researchers are expected to spend periods of time at Brunel during their registration. Full-time postgraduate researchers should normally spend the equivalent of 6 months at Brunel across their normal period of registration (ideally at least 2 months at Brunel during any one year of registration – pro-rata for part-time students). The aim should be to schedule time spent at Brunel to coincide with key events in the postgraduate research degree lifecycle, including their viva voce examination.
- 5.4 Category A postgraduate researchers should normally, at the commencement of their registration, attend the University in order to undertake their 4-week review and any induction programme offered by the College/Department.
- 5.5 Category A postgraduate researchers must undertake any training required by the University and any additional training required as a result of supervision meetings/progression reviews. Such training may take place to coincide with their visits to Brunel. Colleges will need to ensure that candidates are able, as far as possible, to participate in generic skills training programmes. Research and transferable skills training may also be delivered electronically via the online delivery of training courses.
- 5.6 Category A postgraduate researchers should be encouraged to attend conferences/events as appropriate.

## **6 Management and Supervision of Category B Postgraduate Researchers**

- 6.1 Postgraduate researchers initially registering as studying at Brunel will not routinely be able to continue to be registered for a Brunel award if they wish to move to off-campus registration for personal reasons.
- 6.2 In certain circumstances consideration may be given to a postgraduate researcher transferring to off-campus registration for personal reasons. Postgraduate researchers are responsible for requesting such a change to their registration before they move to off-campus study and should discuss with their supervisory team any problems that may arise as a result. Recommendations for such a change will need to consider factors such as how close the postgraduate researcher is to submitting their thesis and if any personal issues are of such a nature as to impact on the likelihood of them completing. In such cases, discussions should take place regarding if a period of abeyance, with a subsequent return to Brunel, is the more appropriate option.
- 6.3 Detailed discussions regarding expectations and management of the postgraduate researcher, arrangements for ongoing support, and whether there is the requirement for a local recognised supervisor (see Section 4 for more details) must take place and the decisions documented. The outcome

of the discussions must be clearly communicated to the postgraduate researcher and supervisory team.

- 6.4 Decisions regarding approval or otherwise of changes to a postgraduate researcher's registration status to off-campus for personal reasons must be made by the Deputy Dean (Academic Affairs).
- 6.5 It should be noted that the University reserves the right to discontinue the registration of the postgraduate researcher if suitable arrangements for onward management and supervision cannot be guaranteed.
- 6.6 Category B postgraduate researchers must have a student mode of attendance in SITS shown as 'not here'.

## **7 Category C Postgraduate Researchers**

- 7.1 Postgraduate researchers undertaking authorised off-campus fieldwork/primary research must be provided with appropriate supervision and support during their period(s) away from Brunel. Their SITS record must be updated with their location whilst undertaking their off-campus research.