



Policy for Admission and Management of Postgraduate Research Degree Students Studying in off-campus mode

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Policy for Admission and Management of PGR Students Studying in off-campus mode

(Applies to new students registered from September 2015)

Scope of Policy

1. This policy governs the admission and management of all postgraduate research degree students registered off-campus to undertake part or all of their studies. It does not apply to those students studying off-campus as part of a formal collaborative partnership with another institution where admission and management of students will be subject to arrangements defined as part of the partnership agreement.

Definitions

2. Students studying off-campus fall into three categories:

Category a Students who are initially registered as off-campus from point of admission.

Category b Students who transfer to authorised off-campus registration for other reasons.

Category c Students undertaking authorised off-campus fieldwork/primary research as part of their studies.

Introduction and Principles

3. The [University Regulations](#) and [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) apply to students registered off-campus. Brunel, as the awarding body, is responsible for ensuring the quality of learning opportunities available to all students.
4. Should PGR students studying in a location other than Brunel be studying as part of a formal collaborative partnership between the University and another institution/organisation, the partnership agreement may detail arrangements and processes which vary from those outlined below.

Consideration of Applications and Admission to the University

Category a students: Students who are initially registered as off-campus from point of admission

General Principle

5. Students planning to study from the outset at a location other than Brunel may be considered for admission for PGR study at Brunel. Each application will be considered on its merits based upon the requirements below.

Applications

Requirements for approval of applications:

6. Applicants must fulfil the criteria for admission to Brunel. Should applicants be identified as requiring compulsory pre-sessional or compulsory/optional in-sessional 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 student's ability to undertake the necessary training.
7. The application process must follow that for all PGR applicants. Interviews must be conducted (in person or via electronic means) according to the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#).
8. Individuals should normally be planning to undertake their studies in an industrial/professional setting/academic institution.
9. In some circumstances, applications may be approved for students not falling into the categories described in paragraph 8. However, it is considered high risk to offer admission in this mode to an applicant who is not planning to study at another institution or in an industrial/professional setting. If Colleges wish to admit a student in such circumstances, there must be a strong reason for doing so and it would need to be established that the student would have appropriate access to suitable resources in order to provide them with an equivalent experience to students based at Brunel.
10. A justification needs to be provided, to inform the admission decision, for why the student is not able to undertake a research degree at the institution where they are planning to undertake their studies.
11. In respect of due diligence, in considering applicants for research degrees who wish to study off-campus, Colleges will be responsible for assuring they are satisfied that the candidate has adequate access to the resources needed to undertake their studies, including gathering and recording evidence from the candidate and/or any institution/industrial setting in which they are proposing to study before deciding whether to admit a student 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.

12. 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 student studying off-campus.
13. Applications will only be approved following the prior identification and approval of a local recognised supervisor. Formal appointment of the recognised supervisor will take place upon admission of the student.

Admission

14. Any offer of admission to Brunel will involve the student receiving the standard information provided to all students admitted to undertake a research degree.
15. Students must be registered as 'not here' on the student record system (SITS).

Recognised supervisors

16. Initial informal contact (at least via email) between the proposed Principal Supervisor and the proposed recognised supervisor should take place during the application process. The informal contact must involve the proposed recognised supervisor being made aware of the responsibilities in relation to the supervision of a Brunel research degree student. This preliminary contact should explore issues such as whether agreement needs to be sought from the institution where the proposed supervisor is based for the student to access facilities/resources. The proposed recognised supervisor needs to provide their agreement in principle to acting in this capacity and carrying out their responsibilities.
17. Proposals for the appointment of recognised supervisors must include a CV, highlighting in particular subject expertise, experience of research student supervision and successful completions; a clear justification and statement of suitability from the proposing College; and information regarding arrangements for induction and ongoing support provided by the College to ensure the individual is familiar with the University's regulations and processes.

Proposals for local recognised supervisors are made by the Deputy Dean (Academic Affairs) and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education and International (or designate).

18. The recognised supervisor will be formally appointed as soon as the application is approved and the admission letter sent to the student. Upon appointment, the recognised supervisor will receive a detailed communication from Quality Assurance which will include the relevant [Senate Regulation\(s\)](#) and the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#). Colleges will be responsible for sharing with the supervisor any College-specific information. The recognised supervisor will need to sign that they have received the information and that they agree to undertake the role as determined and this information will be held by Quality Assurance. Recognised supervisors will be appointed for the period of the student's registration.
19. Recognised supervisors are part of the student's supervisory team and will not be recorded as the Principal Supervisor. They are expected to play a full part in the support for and management of the student as detailed in the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#).

Management and Supervision of Category a Students

26. The Principal supervisor must be a permanent member of Brunel academic staff. The Principal Supervisor should maintain regular contact with the student.
27. 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 recognised supervisor, but the Principal Supervisor must maintain oversight.
28. The requirements for progression reviews, annual reviews and formal meetings with the whole supervisory team must be followed, as set out in the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#) and should where possible coincide with the student's visits to Brunel (see paragraph 29 below).
29. Students are expected to spend periods of time at Brunel during their registration. Full-time students 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.
30. Students 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.
31. Students 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.

32. Students should be encouraged to attend conferences/events as appropriate.

Category b Students: Students who request transfer to off-campus registration.

20. Students 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.
21. In certain exceptional circumstances consideration may be given to a student transferring to off-campus registration for personal reasons. Students are responsible for requesting such a change to their registration before they move to off-campus study and should discuss with their supervisory teams any problems leading to them requesting such a change in their mode of attendance. Recommendations for such a mode change will need to take into account factors such as how close the student is to submitting their thesis and if any personal issues are of such a nature as to impact on the likelihood of the student completing. In such cases discussions should take place regarding if a period of abeyance, with a subsequent return to Brunel, is the most appropriate option.
22. Detailed discussions regarding expectations and management of the student and arrangements for ongoing support must take place and the decisions documented. The outcome of the discussions must be clearly communicated to the student and supervisory team.
23. Decisions regarding approval or otherwise of changes to students' registration status to off-campus for personal reasons must be made by the Deputy Dean (Academic Affairs).
24. Should it be agreed that a student can change their registration to off-campus, appropriate local support must be arranged before the mode change is implemented.
25. It should be noted that **the University reserves the right to discontinue the registration of the student if suitable arrangements for the onward management and supervision of the student cannot be guaranteed.**

Category c Students

Students 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.