UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

CODE OF PRACTICE ON ADMISSION OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

Index of points

1. Introduction
2. Admission
3. Choice of Research Topic
4. Eligibility for admission to the DDS
5. Eligibility for admission to the MD
6. Research Fellows and Research Associates

1. Introduction

1.1 Where a question of interpretation arises reference should be made to the University Regulations, which take precedence.

1.2 It is recognised that the unit responsible for certain aspects of the admission of research students varies for good reason across the University and may be either the department or the principal academic unit. For the sake of brevity the following Code of Practice refers only to the principal academic unit (except when referring to those aspects of the procedures which are clearly a University-level responsibility). All references to the principal academic unit should therefore be interpreted as referring to department or principal academic unit in accordance with practice in the particular part of the University concerned. The term “Head of principal academic unit” should be interpreted as referring to “The Head of principal academic unit or nominee”.

1.3 The term “student(s)” in this Code of Practice should be interpreted as referring to students registered for qualifications that are designated as research degrees under the University’s Regulations.

2. Admission

2.1 Admission requirements and admission procedures detailed in University publications should include an indication whether and at what stage an interview and/or qualifying examination is normally required.

2.2 Applicants resident in the United Kingdom will normally be required to attend for interview before a decision to recommend admission is taken.

2.3 In the case of applicants from overseas, whom it is not possible to interview, special care will be taken in assessing the candidate's suitability to undertake the research programme proposed in the light of study previously undertaken and qualifications obtained.

2.4 Applicants whose first language is not English shall be required in accordance with the Regulations, to provide evidence satisfactory to the University that they have adequate knowledge of written and spoken English of a standard sufficient to undertake their research and also such taught courses as are a required part of research training. Further details may be found here: http://www.international.bham.ac.uk/english-language-reqs.htm.

2.5 It shall be made clear to such applicants that they will be required to submit their thesis in English unless formal permission to use another language is given before the candidate is admitted to the University.

2.6 The recommendation to admit an applicant to a programme of research shall in all cases be made by the Head of the principal academic unit concerned or his or her nominee for approval under procedures approved by the Senate or delegated authority.

2.7 Before making a recommendation to admit, the person responsible for making the recommendation shall be satisfied:

2.7 .1 That the candidate is appropriately qualified for the proposed programme of work.

2.7 .2 That, on the information available, the proposed programme of work should be capable of being studied to the depth required to obtain the degree to which the candidate aspires.

2.7 .3 That the proposed programme of work can reasonably be expected to be completed within the maximum time permitted in the regulations for the degree to which the candidate aspires.

2.7 .4 That appropriate necessary resources (e.g. library, computing, laboratory facilities, technical assistance) are available and are likely to remain available throughout the expected period of research.

2.7 .5 That proper supervision can be provided and maintained throughout the likely period of research, including during any periods of study leave by the supervisor or time spent abroad by the student and that satisfactory contingency plans exist for adequate supervision in the event of the discontinuation of the arrangements originally made. In making this judgement, account will be taken of the fact that supervision can best be provided by persons active in research and with a research interest related to that of the student.

2.8 Should an applicant seek to transfer their registration from another UK University to the University of Birmingham

2.8 .1 The applicant must:

a Submit an application with references, supporting documents and reason for requesting a transfer. Normally, at least one reference should be from the current supervisor(s) and should contain information of the applicant's progress to date.

b Provide, where appropriate, confirmation that funding from an external sponsor will be transferred should an offer be made by the University of Birmingham.

2.8 .2 The relevant principal academic unit must:

a Ensure that an appropriate supervisory team is available.

b Be satisfied that the applicant has been progressing satisfactorily at their previous institution.

c Recommend the period of registration that the principal academic unit wishes the applicant to transfer and thereby confirm the minimum period of registration to be completed at the University of Birmingham.

2.8 .3 Admissions will:

a Check that regulations have been met regarding the required period of registration in order to obtain a University of Birmingham degree.

b Check the student's qualifications to ensure they meet the entry requirements for the University of Birmingham.

c Obtain confirmation from the previous institution of the official date of the student's registration and of the progress of the applicant to date (for example, the reference from the supervisor).

d Seek assurance that the existing supervisory team and the previous institution are in agreement for a transfer to be made to this institution.

e If appropriate, obtain confirmation from the external sponsor for the transfer of funding.

f Provide a formal written offer letter to the student, stating any appropriate conditions.

g Provide a copy of this letter to the Student Records Research Team and the Principal academic unit.

2.9 The formal offer of admission shall be issued to the applicant by the Director of Admissions or his/her nominee, acting on behalf of the University authority responsible for taking the decision to admit. It shall include the following information:

2.9 .1 The field of study.

2.9 .2 The start date and likely duration of study and the minimum and maximum times permitted.

2.9 .3 Any conditions to be satisfied before admission.

2.9 .4 Any conditions affecting progress to successful completion of the proposed work (including any qualifying thesis or other work required for formal assessment).

2.9 .5 Any preparatory courses which the student may be required to take on or before arrival and, if appropriate, their effect on the overall period of study.

2.9 .6 The fees for the first year of the programme including information on the level of any bench fees, and a statement of the date by which payment is required.

2.9 .7 the current estimated annual cost of maintenance for non-UK students.

2.9 .8 The name(s) of the member(s) of staff provisionally appointed as the supervisor(s).

2.10 A copy of the formal offer letter will be sent to the applicant's sponsor (if any) if this is requested by either the applicant or the sponsor or is otherwise thought to be appropriate.

2.11 Further information, as specified in the Code of Practice on the Supervision and Monitoring Progress of Research Students, shall be sent to the applicant, either with the formal offer of admission or at some other date before initial registration.

2.12 Applications for admission should be dealt with as expeditiously as possible by all concerned in the process and any valid reasons for delay recorded. The progress of applications will be monitored by the Admissions Office. Brief reasons for a rejected application should be recorded with the application form.

3. Choice of Research Topic

3.1 The field of study will be determined in at least general terms before admission. A final choice and definition of the research topic may be taken before or after admission according to circumstances. Decisions shall be taken in consultation between the applicant/student and supervisor as soon as possible in the light of what is appropriate for the discipline concerned. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that delay in determining a topic is kept to a minimum and that the Head of principal academic unit is kept informed.

3.2 The choice of research topic may in practice be determined by the research in progress in the principal academic unit or by an external funding body. Industrial needs may in appropriate circumstances influence the choice of research fields.

4. Eligibility for admission to the DDS

4.1 Five years from the date of having passed the Final BDS examination of this University a candidate will be eligible to apply for permission to register for the higher degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery.

4.2 Graduates of other Universities will be expected to submit their work to the University which awarded their primary degrees. But a graduate of another University may be permitted in certain circumstances to apply for permission to register for the degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery of this University. Such candidates must:

(i) have been in possession of a degree recognised for Full Registration by the General Dental Council of the United Kingdom for five years; and

(ii) have been engaged in postgraduate study in this University or associated hospitals for at least two years

whilst holding a full-time, part-time or honorary University appointment throughout this period; and

(iii) submit the thesis within two years of leaving that appointment.

5. **Eligibility for admission to the MD**

5.1 Applicants must have passed the Final MBChB examination of this University. Such candidates must normally be engaged in postgraduate study in this University or associated hospitals whilst holding a full-time, part-time or honorary University appointment.

5.2 A graduate of another University may be permitted in certain circumstances to apply to register. Such candidates must:

(i) be in possession of a degree recognised for Full Registration by the General Medical Council of the United Kingdom; and

(ii) be engaged in postgraduate study in this University or associated hospitals whilst holding a full-time, part-time or honorary University appointment.

6. **Research Fellows and Research Associates**

6.1 A Research Fellow or Research Associate may register as a candidate for a research degree on the following conditions:

6.2 The Senate or delegated authority concerned shall be satisfied as to the suitability of the candidate on academic grounds.

6.3 The same authorities shall be satisfied that the candidate will have sufficient time, apart from his or her duties as a Research Fellow or Research Associate, for the research required for the degree as well as facilities for a suitably broad training in research method.

6.4 Registration shall normally be sought at the commencement of the candidate's research degree programme and the required period of advanced study and research in the University shall be specified by the appropriate authority at the time of registration: this will normally be at least two academic years in the case of a Masters degree and at least six academic years in the case of a Doctors degree. These periods may be reduced in individual cases where it can be shown that a candidate is working full-time on the research degree project.