Research Degree Admissions Statement (GEDS)

1. **Overview of Research Degree Admissions:**
   All applications are considered by the postgraduate tutor and forwarded to other staff based on their research interests. Where an application is appropriate for further consideration (i.e. staff with appropriate expertise are available and the applicant has an appropriate background), the applicant will be interviewed, either by phone or Skype if they are based abroad, or in person. Interviews are normally carried out by at least two members of staff, including the proposed supervisor(s) and an experienced member of staff. The proposal that the applicant submits is an important part of the selection process and students are encouraged to discuss their proposals with the appropriate staff before making a formal application.

2. **Criteria against which applicants will be assessed:**
   The academic potential of individual candidates is assessed by admissions staff using their academic judgment, in line with the *College Terms and Conditions of Enrolment* and the *College Research Student Admissions Policy*.

   - Offers of admission are based on an assessment of the candidate’s likely success in completing a research degree within four years (full-time) or seven-years (part-time). The Department will also consider, on the basis of the applicant’s proposal, whether there are sufficient resources in place to support the student’s specific research project, in accordance with the College’s Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

   - Applicants may be required to demonstrate their proficiency in the English language via an IELTS or similar test, through a written piece of work, or through an oral interview.

   - In addition to the candidate’s academic record, other relevant data considered include the research proposal, academic references, professional qualifications, and relevant work experience.

   - All applications are treated on an equal and fair basis and decision-making is made in accordance with Birkbeck College policy on equal opportunities. Consideration of applications from students who declare a disability is based on the same criteria and principles as for other applicants. Implementation of the Research Student Admissions Policy is sensitive to the different experiences of disabled applicants, and takes into account their response to the opportunities and challenges they have encountered, on the understanding that these may be individual to the applicant. Applicants with a disability are encouraged to disclose this to the College, to enable any necessary adjustments to be planned in support of their education. Failure to do so may impact on the ability to make any necessary reasonable adjustments.
3. **Weighting of different criteria:**

   - The primary consideration is the fit between the Department and the applicant’s research project and the likely success of completion within normative time.

   - Next is the application form, including academic record, research proposal, academic references, professional qualifications and relevant work experience.

   - Interview.

   - Supplementary written material where requested.

4. **Process for considering forms and assessing candidates:**

   - Initial consideration is based on information supplied in the applicant’s application, including the research proposal. Departments may also request additional information to be supplied. The application is considered by one member of staff (in consultation with other staff, where appropriate). If the application clearly does not meet the criteria for admission, or in cases where the Department does not have the right supervisory expertise or other resources, the applicant will be informed that their application has been rejected.

   - Applicants who proceed to the second stage of selection will be interviewed, either in person or by other arrangements (such as by telephone, skype or other appropriate internet-based technology). Interviews will normally be conducted by at least two members of the Department.

   - Applicants may also be asked to provide supplementary written material, such as an example of their work or a set written task. This written material will be used to assess a candidate’s suitability for PGR study. It may also be used to distinguish between applicants with similar profiles or to give further information on which to base a decision (for example, an applicant presenting non-standard qualifications).

   - Candidates will be contacted by Departments within 4 weeks of their interview to inform them of the outcome. On occasion, conditional offers may be made and applicants will be notified what any conditions of admission are as part of the offer, in line with the College Research Student Admissions Policy.

5. **Arrangements for Cross-School admissions:**

   The administrative responsibility for handling cross-School admissions lies with the department that received the application. On receipt of the application, the ‘home’ administrator contacts the relevant potential supervisors, forwarding application materials; liaising with the applicant and academic staff; and arranging an interview where required. The Research Degree Admissions Policy of the ‘home’ department
will apply, but all communications / decisions are undertaken on a joint basis between potential supervisors.