Policy and Procedure for the Registration of “Mixed Mode” Research Students

Introduction

1. One of the principal aims of Birkbeck, according to its Mission Statement, is to “provide part-time higher education courses which meet the changing educational, cultural, personal and career needs of adults…”.

2. However, current UK visa restrictions mean that it is not normally possible for part-time students from overseas to obtain student visas; this means that very few international students are able to access the College’s part-time programmes.

3. The “mixed mode” registration status is intended to enable international students to combine periods of full time study in the UK with part-time study in their home country, towards a research degree. This Policy and Procedure will outline the conditions of such registration and the arrangements that participating Schools and Departments should make when considering accepting a student onto a “mixed mode” programme.

Criteria

4. The registration of all research students of the College is subject to the provisions of the College’s Code of Practice for Postgraduate Training and Research for the MPhil and PhD Degrees, the College’s Research Student Admissions Policy and the Regulations for the Research Degrees of MPhil and PhD. In particular, the admission of any research student to a research degree programme of the College is at the College’s discretion. No student will be admitted to a research degree programme of the College where the relevant Department does not consider that proposed arrangements will enable it to undertake its obligations as described in the College’s Code of Practice or that the student is likely to satisfactorily complete the programme.

5. Students registered to the “mixed mode” status must spend a minimum period equivalent to one year in attendance at the College; this will normally be in one block period of a year or in smaller periods that make up to one year in total.¹

6. Before admission, The Department accepting the student must confirm:
   a) proposed periods of attendance at the College for supervision and other purposes which add up in total to the equivalent of one year or more;
   b) any periods when the supervisors might if appropriate visit the student in their home country;
   c) means of communications between the supervisors and student during the periods in the home country;
   d) how the Department intends to ensure that the student is given sufficient support for the development of the methodology for the programme, including access to appropriate skills training courses and events.

Procedure

7. The usual application, admissions and registration arrangements for research students should apply for students applying to register to “mixed mode” status.

¹ The College does not normally sponsor student visas for visits of less than six months; students wishing to arrange visits of shorter duration should apply for a student visitor visa to do so. Students should be aware that applications for a visitor’s visa in such circumstances may be refused by the UK Border Agency, and that visa arrangements should, as far as possible, be made before confirming arrangements for their study with the College.
8. The annual fee for students registered to mixed mode status is at the discretion of the school, but will not normally be less than one year’s full-time fee plus three further years at 40% of half the full-time fee, spread across four years. This fee would normally remain the fee payable, subject to an inflationary increase, should registration extend beyond four years.

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