

**BIRMINGHAM**  
CONSERVATOIRE



# **BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY**

## **BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE RESEARCH DEGREES HANDBOOK**

**September 2010**

*This handbook supplements the University Research Degrees Handbook,  
which has precedence.*

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## 1. Welcome

Welcome to Birmingham Conservatoire and our research-degree programme. If this is your first year, you may have questions not answered in this Handbook, but your **Director of Studies** should be able to answer most of your questions. Do nonetheless make early contact with **Carrie Churnside** (Research Degrees Coordinator, room G32) and **Liz Reeve** (Faculty Research Administrator, room 5, Faculty Research Office).

If you are not yet **enrolled**, you will need to do this immediately. Research students are enrolled centrally in the university, so you need to contact the BCU Research Officer, **Beccy Boydell**, directly. She works in the Academic Registry, Perry Barr campus (see Contacts below). If problems remain, you should consult Carrie Churnside or Liz Reeve. Until you are enrolled, you are not entitled to use any of BCU's services, including their staff. Enrolment occurs annually, so be sure to enrol early in September to avoid being locked out.

Once you are enrolled, Beccy will send you the BCU's Research Students Handbook, to which this Handbook is a supplement dealing with Conservatoire-specific matters. If there is any conflict between documents, the University Handbook has precedence. You should also look at the Conservatoire's **Policy for Research Degrees**, which you can find on the home page of the Conservatoire's research web site.

## 2. Essential Contacts for research degree students

*(for a more comprehensive list of contacts see the Appendix)*

The **Faculty Research Office** is Rm 5, second floor, contact as for Liz Reeve.

**Liz Reeve**, Faculty Research Administrator, Room 5.

Telephone: 0121 331 5925; email: [liz.reeve@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:liz.reeve@bcu.ac.uk)

**Carrie Churnside**, Conservatoire Research Degrees Coordinator, room G32

Telephone: 0121 331 6907; email: [carrie.churnside@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:carrie.churnside@bcu.ac.uk).

The **BCU Research Office** is in the University Registry at Perry Barr, as for:

**Beccy Boydell**, Research Officer, BCU

Telephone: 0121 331 7686; email: [beccy.boydell@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:beccy.boydell@bcu.ac.uk)

Faculty Librarian: **Francis Firth**,

Telephone: 0121 331 5915, email: [francis.firth@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:francis.firth@bcu.ac.uk)

If you are a composer, you should also make early contact with

**Joe Cutler**, Head of Composition, telephone: 0121 331 5926; email:

[joe.cutler@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:joe.cutler@bcu.ac.uk)

### 3. Induction procedures

Whether this is your first year as a research student or you are re-enrolling, you need to arrange early meetings with your Director of Studies and with Carrie Churnside, Research Degrees Coordinator. You may have important questions, and we need to discuss with you

- the exact balance of your supervisory team (e.g. number of hours for each);
- your previous year's report if you are a returning student;
- your Personal Development Programme (PDP, see below);
- any outstanding questions, such as whether you have access to the University computer network.

For first-year students, the first **Research Training Day** provides essential information concerning induction. In 2010, this event occurs on Saturday 9th October, from 10.30 am to 4.00 pm. At this event you will need your **network ID** to register on the BCU computer Intranet as a research student. You need this to access Moodle (see Appendix 3) where all essential papers are available, and also to use the computers in the Research Students' Room.

### 4. Annual progress and Personal Development procedures

Towards the end of the academic year, you and your supervisors are required to complete formal reports on your progress. These are collected by the Research Administrator, and the Research Degrees Coordinator uses them to generate a confidential summary of each student's progress which is considered at URDC and which forms part of the Conservatoire's Annual Report on Research Degrees. You will be sent a copy of this summary, and at that time you will be asked to come to the Research Office to discuss your reports with the Research Degrees Coordinator and to review your PDP profile (see below). This is an opportunity to communicate your current successes as well as problems, and your successes may well find their way on to the Research pages of the Birmingham Conservatoire website.

If you are labouring under personal or academic problems, do please discuss these at an early stage either with your Director of Studies, and/or with Carrie Churnside, Liz Reeve or someone else with experience of our research department, for help and support. Note that all such matters will be handled with sympathy and full confidentiality. *So don't wait until the annual report to report a problem!*

#### ***The Personal Development Programme (PDP)***

Research takes many forms and may cover a wide range of skills. It can also make pressing demands on your personal life, such as require organisation and strategy to cope with effectively. Someone at the Conservatoire may be

able to help you achieve your particular goals, or put you in touch with someone who can.

**The purpose of the Personal Development Programme is to help you to identify any actions that can be taken in the coming year that will support your research (as distinct from doing the research itself).** The outcomes may be very simple (e.g. setting yourself so many hours per week for your research and keeping a record, or keeping to identified deadlines); signing on to a short course (e.g. in using Statistics software); going to conferences or submitting to composition competitions; gaining experience in software such as MAX/MSP for composers; or managing some aspect of your private life in a more positive way. Where there are financial implications, we can sometimes provide support (funds permitting!).

To help you devise your annual PDP, a simple form is attached (Appendix 2), and is also available in Moodle. Discuss what you need with your Director of Studies and once you're both happy with this, send a copy to Liz Reeve in the Research Office. These are securely held and treated with complete confidentiality.

### ***Recording Supervisions***

(1) A **formal signed record** of each supervision is now required (Appendix 3). Your supervisor will ask you to sign this simple form at each supervision. Email contacts are archived by the supervisor as a similar record.

(2) Many students also find it useful to record a **summary of the discussion**, not least because it encourages reflection and provides a context for discussions at the next supervision. Moodle contains a template for recording details of supervisions, which you are urged to use. It reminds you to record work submitted, new work agreed and a summary of points discussed. It is the student's responsibility to complete the record form after each supervision and lodge it on the Moodle intranet site. Instructions for accessing Moodle are in Appendix 4. Do consult Liz Reeve if you have any problems using Moodle.

It is your supervisor's responsibility to see that you sign the record of attendance;

It is **your** responsibility to write up the record of the supervision.

## 5. Faculty Research Degrees Committee

It's useful to know how the research programme is administered in the Conservatoire. Since Aug. 2008, the conservatoire has become part of an enlarged faculty including English, the School of Acting and Media Studies. Research degrees are now administered by a faculty- wide Research Degrees Committee, **FRDC**, which will meet once or twice per term. FRDC is responsible for the management of research degrees across the Faculty and is answerable to the University Research Degrees Committee (**URDC**). It also reports at each meeting of Faculty Board. It meets two or three times a term.

The formal remit of FRDC includes:

- Strategies for the development of Research Degrees in the Faculty of Performance, Media and English;
- The Registration process and the formal approval of 9R forms;
- Research Student Training;
- Supervision training for staff;
- Selection of Examiners;
- Overseeing the Examination process;
- Approval of the Annual Report, including individual reports on each student;
- Quality Assurance issues;
- Ethical issues (the Faculty Ethical Research Committee reports to FRDC);
- Consideration of any other topic as required by URDC.

Some of this might be delegated to the 'schools' (e.g. the Conservatoire), who are likely to set up research sub-groups.

## 6. Notes on Registration

*Registration*, not to be confused with *Enrolment*, means the formal approval of your detailed research project by FRDC and URDC. Whereas enrolment happens every year, registration occurs only once, except for those who transfer from MPhil to PhD. The Research Degrees Handbook gives lots of information about preparing your registration documentation, and here are some supplementary details.

Registration should occur during your first **year** of study. Approving registrations is one of the principal tasks of FRDC and URDC. The process involves four stages and typically takes several months:

1. the **development** of a detailed project, with the help of your supervisors;
2. the **writing up** of this project to the satisfaction of your supervisors;
3. the **approval** of your project by FRDC;
4. the **formal ratification** of your project by URDC.

You should expect there to be revisions at every stage of this process; it is therefore excellent practice for the protracted process of drafting your thesis or (as a composer) your commentary. Here are the stages in more detail:

Stage 1: Obtain the form **9R** from your supervisor or Liz Reeve and work first on Section 4 with your Director of Studies. Do show an advanced draft of Section 4 to your second supervisor for a second opinion.

Stage 2: When you and your supervisors are happy with your draft Section 4, complete Sections 1-3 and section 5 (the rest is completed by us), and email the whole document to Carrie Churnside (must be e-format, since the form is not yet complete). She may want to discuss this with you.

Stage 3: Once completed, it is then presented to FRDC and defended by your Director of Studies. FRDC will typically have questions or suggestions that your DoS will discuss with you. A further draft might be necessary at this stage.

Stage 4: Once it is approved by FRDC, the document will be passed to URDC for formal approval.

### *Composers*

The process of **Registration** is no different for composers, although the project description (Section 4) assumes a different form. The approved template guidelines for writing up composition projects are available from the Research Office (Rm 5) or can be downloaded from Moodle. Composers are usually allocated an 'academic' supervisor to assist with the development of your project, but it is important that your Director of Studies is also involved in its development from the start.

## 7. Research student entitlements and obligations

### *Supervision*

All students are entitled to a fixed number of contact hours with their **supervisors**. Each student is allocated at least two supervisors, one of which is designated the **Director of Studies**. Contact time is specified at induction. The designated contact hours of formal supervision, in total, are:

**20 hours per year** for part-time students

**40 hours per year** for full-time students

This time is apportioned between your supervisors, in consultation with you at your initial meeting with the Research Degrees Coordinator. Any subsequent adjustment must be approved by the Research Degrees Coordinator.

### *Changing Supervision or adjusting the apportionment*

Carrie Churnside and your Director of Studies are the people to talk to if you wish to adjust your supervision. Note that part-time staff are contracted to teach you at least to the end of each term and that all changes of supervision must be approved by the University, so whilst we will do all we can to ensure that you have the very best supervision we can offer, please do not expect rapid or frequent changes. Your Director of Studies assumes a certain responsibility for your work, so a change of DoS is quite drastic (see **Registration**). Nonetheless, if a change is necessary it is better that it is done sooner rather than later, with the minimum of fuss.

### *Pastoral Matters*

All your supervisors, the Research Degrees Coordinator, the Principal and many other staff are willing to offer support and advice in matters of personal concern to you. You will find many other staff at the Conservatoire who are also happy to discuss any problems you may have and to offer whatever help and support they can. It is better if potential problems are discussed with someone earlier rather than later. Do also contact **Student Services** where there are trained counsellors and advisors (see the Research Students Handbook for details).

### *Entitlements and Obligations*

Student entitlement includes:

- a) a designated Director of Studies; he/she should be selected on the strength of appropriate subject expertise and research supervision experience;
- b) one or two other supervisors whose role is supportive of and complementary to the Director of Studies;
- c) where appropriate, an Adviser who is available for consultation or is a local contact for overseas students;
- d) access to the Research Degrees Coordinator and Principal at all reasonable times;
- e) access to the appropriate Head of School in the case of instrumentalists and composers;

- f) a total of 20 hours supervision per year for part-time students and 40 hours per year for full-time students;
- g) access to the Research Students' Room (Rm.29); access to computer facilities appropriate to the approved project, and to Email and the internet;
- h) full rights to the BCU library;
- i) access to lectures, in particular those provided for Masters and PGDip students at the Conservatoire;
- j) access to all performing and similar activities that do not require audition, and the right to audition for those that do;
- k) a formal programme of research seminars;
- l) formal and regular feedback on your work and progress;
- m) formal annual feedback on progress, as well as regular informal feedback during supervisions;
- n) support as appropriate for the attendance at conferences and similar events.

Student obligations include:

- a) maintaining regular contact with the Director of Studies and second tutor;
- b) completing assignments and drafts as required and as appropriate;
- c) registering as a student user of computers;
- d) submitting the Registration document, normally within six months for full-time students and twelve months for part-time students;
- e) attending research seminars and other classes as recommended by the tutors;
- f) completing the record of supervision form after each supervision, and submitting this to your supervisor within one week of the event;
- g) regularly presenting research seminars or comparable presentations (e.g. performances of compositions) in the Conservatoire;
- h) attending conferences or appropriate external events on a regular basis;
- i) playing a full and active part in Conservatoire life as consistent with the student's specialisms and personal circumstances;
- j) using the Research Students' room with due consideration for others, and maintaining its security;
- k) making appropriate use of the pastoral and academic support provided by the Research Degrees Coordinator and Principal;
- l) completing your annual report on progress and discussing this with your Director of Studies and the Research Degrees Coordinator;
- m) completing the thesis within the designated time.

## 8. Details of research skills training opportunities

You will need to regularly check the research section of Moodle, for which you will need a **user-ID** to access the university system. Please contact Liz Reeve if you encounter any difficulties with this.

### *Research Training*

The Conservatoire runs a programme of Research **Training and Skills** (Appendix 6) which is compulsory for first-year students, and may also be attended by any other enrolled research students. This programme is formally approved by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Details of the timetable for the current year are appended to this Handbook. In addition, you may want to use the opportunities for Research Training for Musicologists offered from time to time by AHRC: see the Research Notice Board located near the canteen for current details.

If you are contracted as a class teacher (i.e. not one-to-one teaching) for the first time, you will be invited to attend the University's programme of **support for Teaching in Higher Education**. If you are engaged in one-to-one teaching for the first time in the Conservatoire, you should be allocated a mentor who will support this important work. Contact Carrie Churnside about this.

### *Research Seminars*

Research students need to keep focused on their project, but not to sever all contact with the wider world of musical study. To help you to maintain the necessary openness of ideas, the Research Seminars are an opportunity to hear something of what is going on in current musicology and composition. They also allow you to develop your skills in **communicating** and **discussing** other people's ideas and their achievements, with each other and within the wider academic/performing community.

The programme of **Conservatoire Research Seminars** runs through the teaching year, usually on the third Tuesday of each month in Full Term (currently 3.30 – 5.00 pm in LR2). Full details are on the Research Degrees noticeboard and on Moodle. They usually follow the format of a specialist speaker (either visiting or from our own research staff) presenting a paper, followed by questions and discussion in which you will be expected to take an active part. In the summer term, there is also the annual **Research Study Day** at which you may be asked to prepare a paper on some aspect of your research or composition. Do make the most of this opportunity to test your ideas by exposing them to colleagues, staff and other students. There is also likely to be an additional Study Day towards the end of the Autumn term, specifically for first-year research students to present the initial stages of their work.

Current information on Research Seminars is attached ( Appendix 6) but **please watch the MPhil/PhD notice board (on the First Floor, near the**

**canteen) for further information** and visit Moodle on a regular and frequent basis.

## 9. Conservatoire resources and facilities

### *The Research Students' Room*

Room 29, situated on the third floor, is reserved for the use of research students. Do use it. You need a code to get in and a password to use one of the four computers in the room. For obvious reasons these need to be kept secure, so please consult Liz Reeve (Room 5) when you first intend to use the room. Do regard the room as your space in the Conservatoire. Share it courteously with other research students but do not allow other students to use it. Desks and computers are available for use. It is not intended as a teaching room. There are many more computers you can use in the Library and in the Foyer Gallery.

Three simple requests:

1. Never give the access code or password to anyone – if anyone asks you for it, refer them to Liz Reeve.
2. Please be reasonable to other users, avoiding noisy conversations.
3. Please keep the room tidy and clean (wash up coffee mugs!).

### *Conservatoire Activities*

Research students are full members of the Conservatoire and entitled to the same access to activities as any undergraduate. However, do note that some ensembles are by audition and others by invitation. If you are interested in performance at any level, keep an eye on the relevant notice boards, which you may find on either the first or second floors, go for the auditions but please do not expect automatic membership of any ensemble. Also make early contact with the staff or students who are organising ensembles and events.

If you are a composer, we will expect you to get involved with the many **Composers' Concerts**, which are sometimes student-led. For logistical reasons, the Conservatoire is not able to guarantee performances of student compositions, and we regard it as a part of your training to know how to persuade, cajole or otherwise interest performers in playing your music. There are many opportunities, but it is up to you to make the most of them, and this will inevitably include a certain amount of social 'leg-work' in getting to know who the performers are and making sure they know who you are. **Joe Cutler** will fill you in on the details. Keep a close eye on the **Composers' Noticeboards** on the second floor.

### *The Website*

The website should contain information that you need, both about our research degree programme and the Conservatoire and BCU in general. It includes official documents such as the University's Research Degrees Regulations and Ethical Research guidelines. If you have any queries or suggestions regarding its content, please pass them to Liz Reeve. The website is dynamic and can quickly be updated.

The front page of the Conservatoire website has a link to current conservatoire successes, and our research students are often featured here. There is an equivalent page in the Research domain of the Conservatoire website. We try to keep these pages up to date, so if you have had any success, e.g. composition prize or performance, or a published article, please send the details to Liz Reeve and she will ensure that it is suitably advertised to the wider world. Please note also that we need to present details of student successes for various formal reports and censuses.

## **10. Representation opportunities and other feedback mechanisms**

### *Formal Representation*

Student reps are elected each year to represent the body of research students at PME Faculty Board. Do participate in the election process, and volunteer yourself if you think you could usefully serve your peers in this way.

### *Feedback Mechanisms*

As well as the formal feedback process for the annual report, there are many more informal opportunities to communicate any matters of interest or concern. Here are some of the more obvious:

- discussion during supervision;
- discussion with Carrie Churnside or Liz Reeve;
- discussion at research training sessions and research seminars;
- formal discussion through your student rep at Faculty Board.

## 11. Some keys to success

- Keep alert to what is going on in the wider world: have a life and don't be a recluse!
- Read and study, concentrating on both content and style – analyse how texts or compositions are written, and how they are laid out. Model your presentation on a current and respected source (e.g. a CUP publication).
- Maintain regular contact with your supervisors and the Research Degrees Coordinator, even if it is only to say that you haven't made much progress!
- Set yourself deadlines and keep to them.
- Keep in touch with your research community: make yourself known by going to conferences, reading papers or submitting compositions, winning prizes etc.
- Don't allow problems to fester. Someone is always available to discuss a problem.
- Be patient: a research dissertation is a public document and so needs to be as perfect as a printed book or score. Editing and revising are essential parts of the research, even though they can be time-consuming and frustrating activities.
- Please don't make unrealistic demands on your tutors: use them sensibly!
- Understand that a research degree is the most advanced qualification available, that it is not easy, and that there are likely to be many unexpected things to be learned along the way, about yourself as well as your subject.

Good luck with your programme.

Carrie Churnside  
Research Degrees Coordinator

## APPENDIX 1

**BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE**  
**Research Department**  
**PhD/MPhil**  
**Personal Development Programme**

*All research students should complete this form, in consultation with their Director of Studies, at the start of each academic year of their studies. The text boxes below can be expanded as necessary (within your word processor) to contain all relevant material, taking as much space as is required. When the form has been completed and signed, please return in paper form to Liz Reeve in the Faculty Research Office (Conservatoire, Room 5).*

**Name:** .....

**PhD / MPhil** (*delete as necessary*)

**Year of research study:** .....

<b>Title of Research Project</b>

<b>How does this project relate to your wider career or professional development?</b>

<b>Are there any particular goals or skills (scholarly, critical, creative, personal, technological, etc.) that you feel an especial need to develop during the coming year in order to support your project? Please give reasons, an indicative timetable, and criteria for success where appropriate.</b>

Signed: ..... [student]                      Date: .....

..... [Director of Studies]

## Appendix 2

### Recording Research Supervision

*A record of each supervision should be completed by the student, approved by the supervisor and filed by Liz Reeve in the Faculty Research Office, room5.*

Student's Name.....

Supervisor.....

Date of Supervision..... Duration of Supervision.....

Please list each of the student's **texts or scores** considered at the tutorial, if any

Please identify the **main focus** of the tutorial

Please list the **main topics** discussed

Agreed **actions** for the student

Agreed **actions** for the supervisor

Other comments

*Note: if this record is not agreed by staff and student, each should submit an independent report. A single report will be assumed to signify agreement.*

**Please return your report to Liz Reeve, [liz.reeve@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:liz.reeve@bcu.ac.uk)**

## Appendix 3

### Accessing and Using Moodle - A Short Guide

Most of the information you need about doing research at Birmingham Conservatoire is posted on-line in Moodle. This guide explains about Moodle and shows you how to access and use the research area. If you want more general information and don't enjoy learning just by experimenting, then there is a link to the Student Guide in the "Using Moodle" section of the General Information area within Moodle. You can find this in the General Resources section of the Conservatoire section on the front page.

*Note: The actual appearance on screen is governed by settings on different computers and as a result what you see may sometimes be slightly different to what is shown in the examples.*

#### Entering the website

Go to the Performance, Media & English (PME) Moodle website located at [moodle.bcu.ac.uk/pme](http://moodle.bcu.ac.uk/pme) and go to the 'Login' block at the top left hand corner of the main page.

Enter your normal BCU ID (this is your username) and password as requested. Your network ID is **a letter followed by eight numbers, the same ID** you used to get onto the network in the first place.

Once you've logged in, you can update your profile at any time (e.g. change your email address) by clicking on your name, which will now appear in the top right corner of the screen, next to the word "Logout".

Your university email address will be loaded into Moodle when you first log on. You can alter this to a personal email address if you wish. You should use whichever email address you check most frequently. The minimum amount of detail you should include in your profile is your year of study and research programme ('research students'). Anyone using the site can read this information.

#### Entering a course

On the home page ([moodle.bcu.ac.uk/pme](http://moodle.bcu.ac.uk/pme)) you will see a block in the centre of the page labelled "Conservatoire" which lists the courses available at the Conservatoire according to year and programme. In almost all cases, courses are protected so that only users who have been provided with an enrolment key (password) may enter. When you first enrol on your course, you will be asked for the password that you will need to enter before you can proceed.

This course requires an 'enrolment key', a one-time password

Enrolment key:

The enrolment key for *Research Degrees* is **thesis**. The enrolment key for *Research Seminars* is **scholar**.

### In the course

In this section we will take a quick tour of the online environment using the *Research degrees* area in “Research Students” and look at how one moves from page to page. Most of the items are described in more detail in the Student Guide (see “Using Moodle” in the main menu on the Conservatoire frontpage).

In the top right hand corner you will see something like the following:

You are logged in as [Steve Halfyard \(logout\)](#)

Clicking on your name you will display your own profile, which you can edit from here. If you click on Logout you will exit the course and return to the Moodle@PerformanceMedia&English main page.

### Basic navigation.

There are a number of ways to move around the course.

*Breadcrumbs* – these form a “trail” that you can click on and follow back to the home page. The Breadcrumbs are a menu bar positioned just below the course title which shows your position in the website. For example:

[PME](#) » [Research](#) » [Resources](#) » **Research Seminars**

- **PME**: Clicking on this would take you to the site homepage.
- **Research**: This is the shortened name for this course. Clicking on this would take you the main course page.
- **Resources**: Clicking on this would display a list of all of the resources (documents, links, text pages, web pages) in this part of the site.
- **Research Seminars**: in the breadcrumbs list, this will appear in a different colour and is not underlined, indicating that this is the page currently being viewed.

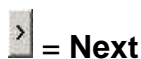
This is only one example of many possible permutations of the breadcrumbs menu. Keep any eye on this as you navigate around the course: you will notice that it changes to reflect your current position.

### *Jump menu*

Whilst in a course activity you can move to another activity or resource in the course by means of the Jump menu, located in the top right corner of any activity page.



This is a drop-down menu – clicking on it will allow you to select from the complete list of activities in the course, in topic order, and navigate directly to your selection. On either side of the Jump menu are “Next / Previous” buttons (below). These will take you back and forth between the activities and resources in the order in which they appear in the course topics.



**= Next**



**= Previous**

Note that if you use these buttons or click on the “Home” or shortened course name links to navigate to another area of the course before you’ve finished the activity on a page, anything you have done in that activity will not be saved. To avoid this always ensure that you complete what you are doing within the activity first e.g. post to a forum, save changes, submit answer.

Throughout the website and course you will encounter text which changes colour and becomes underlined when you move your on screen cursor over it. These are text links which, when clicked, will take you to whatever is described in the link text.

Finally, it is also possible to navigate between pages by using the back/forward navigation buttons on your web browser. This is not recommended: you will obtain more consistent results by using the navigation options within the website and course pages. If you use the browser buttons, Moodle will not always be able to find the page you are looking for.

### *Using the course page*

The main course page is usually divided into three areas, the left and right hand columns, and the central area. Some courses divide the central area into weeks (i.e. there is a block for each week of the course) whilst others are divided into topics. The first block is the topic outline, and this is followed by a series of blocks, each one of which can contain a different topic and set of activities.

The side blocks allow you to see who is enrolled on the course (“Participants”); a summary of different activities in the course; a calendar of events;

## Materials in the research degrees area

**News Forum:** any message posted here is automatically sent by email to everyone subscribed to the module. Research students as well as tutors can use this for posting information or asking questions that are relevant to everyone.

**Discussion area:** this is a “chat room” in which tutors and/ or students can agree to meet if a face to face meeting is not possible.

**Using Moodle:** this is a web version of the document you are currently reading.

**Research Student Handbook:** this contains

- the handbook as a Word document using hypertext (i.e. click on highlighted words in the contents to go straight to the section you want to read).
- a downloadable copy of the 9R form
- additional guidelines for composers on completing the 9R
- a hypothetical assignment submission, just to demonstrate how this works!

### Research seminars programme

**Research Study Days:** for all research students

**Research Training Days:** details of the programme of training events for new research students.

## General points about using Moodle

- In all modules, there is a message board that staff will use to send important messages to you by email. These are automatically sent to everyone, and you should not reply to them unless you are specifically asked to do so. Do please read these messages: they may contain information about changes to the timetable, assessment arrangements and other important information that we will assume you have received once the message has been posted.
- Some modules also make use of discussion forums. Initially, everyone is subscribed to these, and messages from them will again be sent automatically to your email account. You can always unsubscribe from these if you become inundated with emails or feel that the content is not relevant to you. Follow the links in blue on the forum’s page to unsubscribe yourself.
- If you post messages to forums or use chat areas within Moodle, remember that all of this material will be read by your tutors. Please make sure you are aware of the University’s policy on use of the BCU Network. Never allow anyone, including other BCU students, to sign into Moodle or the network using your id and password.
- Remember to update your personal profile with any details that change (e.g. email address).

### Having Problems?

If you have a problem using Moodle in general, contact Liz Reeve:

[liz.reeve@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:liz.reeve@bcu.ac.uk)

## Appendix 4

### Notes on Preparing and Submitting your Thesis

As a research student, the **submission of your thesis** is the key event. Here are some procedural guidelines to give you an idea of how it works:

1. About 6 months before you intend to submit, discuss possible **External Examiners** with your supervisor and with the Research Degrees Coordinator. The **selection** of your examination panel is the responsibility of FRDC, but you will be closely consulted. The **Chair** of the panel is never one of your supervisors, and thus plays a neutral role in the discussions. The **ratification** of your examination panel is one more task for **URDC**, so please allow sufficient time prior to your submission for this process to be complete (typically six months). Please do not submit your thesis before your examiners are ratified by URDC.
2. Ensure that your Director of Studies has thoroughly approved your thesis **in its complete form**, including Contents, Bibliography etc. It is *extremely risky* to submit anything that is not approved by your Director of Studies.
3. Accept your Director of Studies' advice on presentation etc: there are certain conventions that may seem trivial but which can render the thesis invalid if you do not conform to them.
4. Ensure your supervisors have read and approved your entire thesis, including the framing pages such as Table of Contents and Bibliography. But do not send your entire thesis for checking until you have approval of the individual chapters – *you must allow your supervisors at least one month to read and check a complete thesis*.
5. Check BCU regulations Section G8 on submission of thesis. For the first submission, ring-bound copies are accepted. The formal, hard-bound copy is only required once your thesis is formally approved by your examiners.
6. Note that everything you submit becomes a **public document**, accessible to anyone in the world who cares to ask for it. It is therefore important that it conforms to our standards at BCU and the Conservatoire as well as your own! A primary responsibility of your supervisors and the examiners is to ensure that it is presentable as such.
7. Do not underestimate the amount of time or effort it takes to **edit** and **correct** your thesis or portfolio (typically six months). Note that this is your responsibility and not your supervisor's. He/she will need to proof-read your text, but *do not expect him or her to do your job of correcting basic, extensive or recurring errors*. Demonstrating that you know what is current good practice and can apply it to your work (in writing, preparing graphics and, for composers, preparing scores) is a central part of the exercise.

8. If English is not your first language, get an English speaker to check your grammar etc; it is not the responsibility of your Director of Studies to teach you English. (That also applies to native English writers, of course!) Check the notes on good academic writing in the **Research Training Programme**.
9. Once it is fully approved by your DoS, your thesis or portfolio of compositions is **submitted** to the Research Officer at Perry Barr, in triplicate. It is then forwarded to your examiners.
10. Once the examiners have received your thesis, the date of the **viva voce** is fixed, normally by the Chair of the examination panel.
11. Possible Outcomes of the **Viva**:
  - (a) immediate approval (very rare!)
  - (b) approval subject to minor amendments (e.g. corrections)
  - (c) returned for resubmission (e.g. revising a chapter or more)
  - (d) MPhil offered to a PhD candidate (subject to University regulations).

Your supervisors are still available to help you to the second examination, but do not expect regular supervision.

## Appendix 5

### ***Research Training 2010 – 11***

†Training sessions are ***compulsory*** for first- year research students and for those not yet registered, and are open to all research students. Session 3 is of special interest to those currently designing their theses.

*\*Research Study Days are opportunities for all research students to meet, read papers, play their music and discuss their ideas. There will be 2 Study Days. MMus students will attend the Study Day on 4<sup>th</sup> June. These sessions complement the monthly Tuesday afternoon research seminars (q.v.).*

#### †Training Session 1: ***Starting a Research Degree***

**Saturday 9th October 2010: 10.30 am – 4.00 pm**  
Library Seminar Room

#### †Training Session 2: ***The Registration Process***

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2011: 10.30 am – 4.00 pm**  
Library Seminar Room

#### †Training Session 3: ***Developing your Thesis***

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2011: 10.30 am – 4.00 pm**  
Library Seminar Room

#### **\*Research Study Days:**

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2010: 10.30 am – 5.00 pm**  
Board Room (first floor)

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2011: 10.30 am – 5.00 pm**  
Board Room (first floor)

## Appendix 6

Birmingham Conservatoire

### **Research Seminars 2010/11**

*Research Seminars are held from 3.30 – 5.00 pm in LR2*

#### **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

**Professor Ronald Woodley** (Professor of Music,  
Birmingham Conservatoire)

*Styles of Pianism around Schumann and Brahms:  
The Neglected Case of Ilona Eibenschütz*

#### **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010**

**Graham O'Reilly** (Director, Ensemble européen William  
Byrd)

*The Real Allegri: The Performance of the “Misereres” of  
Gregorio Allegri and Tommaso Bai in the Sistine  
Chapel in the 19th century*

#### **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

**Hans Koller** (Lecturer in Jazz, Birmingham Conservatoire)

*Innovation as Tradition in Jazz: George Russell’s  
Lydian-Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization*

## Useful Contacts

**Birmingham Conservatoire** (Office): 0121 331 5901  
For other internal numbers, dial 0121 331 plus extension

**Carrie Churnside**, Research Degrees Coordinator: Room G32, x 6907  
[carrie.churnside@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:carrie.churnside@bcu.ac.uk)

**Ronald Woodley**, Professor of Music and Director, Research Centre for Music and Performance, Room 5, X5925  
[ronald.woodley@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:ronald.woodley@bcu.ac.uk)

**Liz Reeve**, Faculty Research Administrator, Room 5, x 5925  
[liz.reeve@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:liz.reeve@bcu.ac.uk)

**Joe Cutler**, Head of Composition, Room 2, x 5926;  
[joe.cutler@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:joe.cutler@bcu.ac.uk)

**Lamberto Coccioli**, Head of Music Technology, G34, x 5917  
[lamberto.coccioli@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:lamberto.coccioli@bcu.ac.uk)

**Beccy Boydell**, Research Degrees Officer, Academic Registry, Feeney Building, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, Perry Barr. x 7686  
[beccy.boydell@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:beccy.boydell@bcu.ac.uk)

**Student Services** (pastoral, health, financial and careers advice) x 6569  
[student.services@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:student.services@bcu.ac.uk)

**The Conservatoire Website:**  
<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/pme/conservatoire>  
This lists all staff with Emails etc.

**The Conservatoire Library:**  
**Francis Firth (Head Librarian):** x 5915

**The Conservatoire research pages:**  
<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/pme/conservatoire/research>  
Explore this and please make suggestions or supply content to Liz Reeve. Check the Links page for useful research contacts etc.