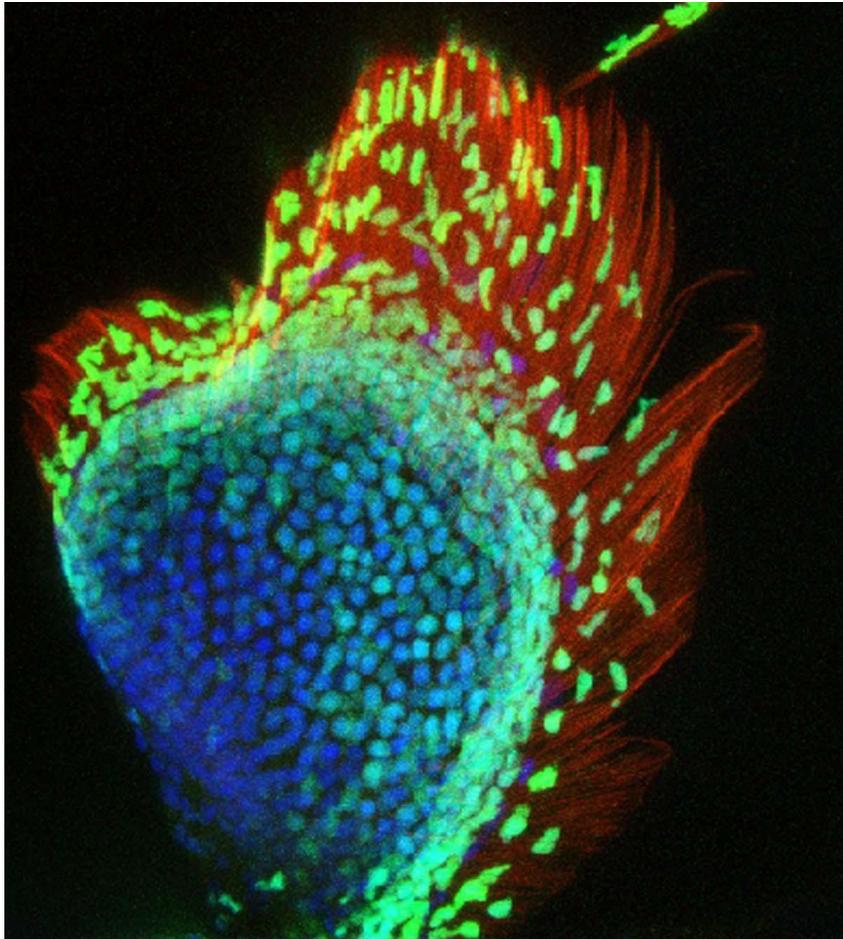


**University of Bristol
Faculty of Biomedical Sciences**



**SWBio DTP: Research Methods for Life Sciences
Taught Handbook
2016-2017**



WELCOME

Dear Students,

Welcome to the SWBio DTP.

I'm sure you are excited at the prospect of starting your postgraduate study. In this first year you will undertake a taught course, of which I am the Course Director.

For the taught course you will undertake two rotation projects, as well as an integrated series of other units. Together, this provides you with many of the key skills to allow you to succeed and make excellent progress in your following years of study.

Please read this handbook thoroughly, which contains all the key information for your taught first year. Each of you are registered at your home institution, but this taught first year is based at the University of Bristol, in the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences. Importantly this means that University of Bristol rules govern this first year. During this year you will all come together as a group for various aspects of this course, at each of the institutions – universities of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, Exeter and Rothamsted Research.

If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact Ruth Batterham (swbio-taught@bristol.ac.uk) or me (Mark.Viney@bristol.ac.uk).

Finally, I'm sure you have already been in touch with Samantha Southern. You will get more emails from her during the year and I ask that you reply to Samantha swiftly, since this helps this programme run to the benefit of each and everyone of you.

I look forward to getting to know you all in the coming year.

Best wishes,

Mark Viney
Professor of Zoology,
Course Director

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This handbook should be read in conjunction with the [Faculty of Biomedical Sciences Postgraduate Handbook 2016/2017](#) and the University of Bristol's [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes 2016/17](#). If there are any sections within these documents or the SWBio DTP Taught Handbook that you do not understand, please contact the Course Director.

Throughout this handbook, when referring to the taught first year, the nomenclature 'taught course' or 'course' is used. However, in the University of Bristol links/handbooks the taught first year will be referred to as 'programme'.

Disclaimer: Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this handbook was correct at the time of release. The current version will be available on the SWBio DTP website and supersedes all previous versions.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

| Name | Telephone | E-mail |
|--|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Prof Mark Viney Course Director | (0117) 39 41203 | Mark.Viney@bristol.ac.uk |
| Prof Michael Mendl Unit Director: Statistics and Bioinformatics | (0117) 928 9485 | Mike.Mendl@bristol.ac.uk |
| Dr James Hodge Unit Director: Rotation projects | (0117) 331 1416 | James.Hodge@bristol.ac.uk |
| Dr Paul Curnow Unit Director: Science in Society, Business and Industry | (0117) 33 11837 | P.Curnow@bristol.ac.uk |
| Dr Gary Barker Unit Director: Core Skills for Life Scientists | (0117) 39 41172 | Gary.Barker@bristol.ac.uk |
| Ruth Batterham Course Administrator. Work pattern, Mon, Wed & Fri: 9:00 to 5:00 | (0117) 33 11599 | swbio-taught@bristol.ac.uk |
| Lindsey Watson Non-academic pastoral contact | (0117) 33 11535 | Lindsey.Watson@bristol.ac.uk |

These listed members of staff are based at the University of Bristol and are contactable by telephone or e-mail.

Please note, we have a central SWBio DTP Taught Mailbox (swbio-taught@bristol.ac.uk). Please use this for any communication in relation to the taught course. This is monitored by Ruth Batterham and Lindsey Watson.

Note: For issues and queries not related to the taught course, please contact your local institutional postgraduate teams.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

In the first year of the SWBio DTP you are studying a range of research and taught elements to give you a breadth of training. This course is called 'Research Methods for Life Sciences' which operates under the University of Bristol's taught rules. Please note, you must pass this year to progress to the next year of your studies.

This handbook provides an overview of the taught course and details of the individual units, their content and their assessments. The information given below should be read carefully and kept for future reference. **Please ensure you take the time to look through the handbook and any related documentation.** It is your responsibility to understand the rules and regulations that govern this taught course

Each of you will be registered within your home institution (where your PhD project will be based) but the taught course sits within the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, University of Bristol. For the taught course you will be taught as a cohort at various sites across the partnership, with teaching delivered by staff from across the partnership and beyond. As the course is governed and administered within the University of Bristol, this means that the administration (for example submission of work, feedback, results) of your taught course is managed by the University of Bristol.

Further information about the taught course and the units will be posted on [Blackboard](#) at various times, and **you must make a habit of looking at this site regularly (i.e. at least once a week).** Information about timetables, lecture material, assessments, marks and accommodation will be posted here. This site will also advise you of any updates to your timetable etc.

All communication related to the taught course will be sent to your Bristol e-mail address. Please ensure you check your Bristol e-mail address regularly. If you decide to use another e-mail address, you must ensure your Bristol e-mail address is redirected accordingly. If you have a mobile phone, we use a text message service to provide you with updates, so please check this regularly too.

2. CALENDAR

| Unit timetable | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Statistics and Bioinformatics | Bioinformatics (Exeter) Mon 10 th Oct – Fri 14 th Oct | Rotation project 1 Mon 19 th Sept-Mon 13 th March |
| | Statistics (Cardiff) Mon 17 th Oct – Fri 21 st Oct | |
| Core Skills for Life Scientists | Total of 15 hours within home institution Institutional welcome week - Fri 9 th Jun | |
| | Cardiff Mon 12 th Dec | |
| | Bristol Tues 13 th Dec | |
| | Rothamsted Wed 14 th Dec | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Exeter Thurs 15 th Dec | |
| Science in Society, Business and Industry | Bristol Mon 20 th Mar – Fri 24 th Mar Mon 27 th Mar – Fri 31 st Mar | Rotation project 2 Tues 14 th March – Fri 28 th July |
| Core Skills for Life Scientists | Bath w/c 5 th Jun | |
| Deadlines, marks and feedback | | |
| Unit | Deadlines for assessments | Marks and feedback to be released |
| Statistics and Bioinformatics | Bioinformatics Fri 4 th Nov 2pm | Fri 25 th Nov |
| | Statistics Fri 11 th Nov 2pm | Fri 2 nd Dec |
| Core Skills for Life Scientists | Grant application Fri 27 th Jan 2pm | Fri 17 th Feb |
| | Peer review Fri 10 th Feb 2pm | Not assessed |
| Rotation project 1 | Report Mon 13 th Mar 2pm | Mon 1 st May |
| Core Skills for Life Scientists | Poster presentation Mon 20 th Mar (morning) <i>and</i> 3 Minute Thesis presentation Mon 20 th Mar (afternoon) | Mon 10 th Apr |
| | Mock grant panel Mon 27 th Mar | Wed 19 th Apr |
| Science in Society, Business and Industry | Policy document Fri 28 th Apr 2pm | Mon 22 nd May |
| | Press release Fri 12 th May 2pm | Mon 5 th June |
| | Pathways to impact statement Fri 26 th May 2pm | Mon 19 th June |
| Rotation project 2 | Report Fri 28 th July 2pm | Fri 8 th Sept |

These dates can be subject to change but you will be made aware of any changes via Blackboard. Please also refer to the DTP cohort activities calendar on the [SWBio DTP website](#) for annual DTP cohort activities.

To access your own online personalised student timetable, please use your [MyBristol Portal](#) and sign-in via the Timetable channel tab.

You are required to attend all timetabled teaching.

3. TAUGHT COURSE INFORMATION

As part of your taught course you will undertake five **mandatory** units as described below.

| Title | Unit Code | Credit Points |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|
| Statistics and Bioinformatics | BIOCM0010 | 20 |
| Core Skills for Life Scientists | BIOCM0012 | 20 |
| Science in Society, Business and Industry | BIOCM0013 | 20 |
| Rotation project 1 | BIOCM0021 | 60 |
| Rotation project 2 | BIOCM0020 | 60 |

Further information about the course can be found in the [course catalogue](#).

Before starting work in the laboratory for your rotation projects, please ensure you have read the relevant Health and Safety documentation for working in the laboratory.

4. PERSONAL TUTORING SYSTEM

You will be allocated a Personal Tutor who will act as a mentor during your first year. Your Personal Tutor will be your local [SWBio DTP Implementation Group representative](#). You will meet with your Personal Tutor in the first two weeks of starting this taught course. Other meetings can be arranged throughout the year by mutual consent. Your Personal Tutor will support your learning and be able to offer advice on careers and other issues. Please refer to the diagram in Annex 1 for further information about support available.

5. DISABILITY

For disability issues, please refer to your local disability service. Information about your local disability service can be found on the following institutional websites:

[Bath >>](#)

[Bristol >>](#)

[Cardiff >>](#)

[Exeter >>](#)

[Rothamsted >>](#)

(Rothamsted link accessible only via Rothamsted's VPN using a Rothamsted laptop/computer. Alternatively e-mail donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk)

6. TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

This handbook should be read in conjunction with the [Faculty of Biomedical Sciences Postgraduate Handbook 2016/2017](#) and the [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught](#)

ASSESSMENT METHODS

We use a range of different methods to assess work for these units, as described below. The pass mark for **each unit is 50%. Penalties will be applied to work that is submitted late without good reason (see section 7).**

Statistics and Bioinformatics:

- Short answer-style questions to assess the ability to determine the most appropriate statistical approach to analyse data sets, and the ability to interpret the outcomes of these test analyses. The written work will also require the students to include an R script to analyse a specific data set, and they will show the outcome from running the script. (50%)
- A practical report on the Bioinformatics work conducted during the week of intensive classroom work and subsequent independent study (50%)

Core Skills for Life Scientists

- Research Poster (25%): 75% on the visual assessment of the poster, 25% on oral presentation of the poster.
- Mock research-grant application in BBSRC format relating to the PhD subject area (50%): 60% on the quality of the application, 40% for mock grant panel.

The grant application will be marked by a member of academic staff from the student's supervisory team.

- Presentation on PhD project in the style of Vitae Three Minute Thesis competition (25%)

Science in Society, Business and Industry

- A press release on the PhD project or selected research paper, aimed at a general readership (30%).
- A Pathways to Impact Statement based on the main PhD project and following standard RCUK format (2 pages A4 in 11pt) (1500 words maximum) (40%).
- A policy document on the PhD project or an area of topical interest. This must follow the format which will be introduced during the taught course (1500 words maximum) (30%).

Rotation Project 1 and 2

- A project report in the style of a research paper (6000 words maximum) (70%).
- Continuous assessment (30%) assessing aspects such as organisation, planning, intellectual input, technical ability, communication etc.

The continuous assessment mark will be awarded by the rotation project supervisor and the project report mark will be marked by two members of academic staff across the SWBio DTP.

Rotation Project 1 and 2 reports will be submitted to [Turnitin](#) to check for plagiarism (refer to section 9).

Unless otherwise stated, assessments will be marked by academic staff across the partnership and moderated by the Unit Directors and / or Course Director.

You will always be in contact with your supervisory team who will give you advice and feedback about your work. However for work that is to be submitted and assessed as part of your taught first year, you should not seek detailed feedback on it. Specifically, for your Rotation Project reports, you are only allowed to give a draft of your report to your supervisor not later than **one week** before the submission deadline. Your supervisor will comment on this and give you feedback before the deadline, but they will not suggest edits to your text. The earlier you give a draft of your report to your supervisor, the longer you will have to act on the feedback that you have received

SUBMISISON OF WORK

Unless you are told otherwise all work should be submitted to Blackboard by the stated deadline (refer to table in section 2). Any changes in deadlines will be communicated via Blackboard.

If your work is submitted after the deadline, it will be marked as normal and then a penalty will be applied. For work that is submitted up to 24 hours late **10 marks will be deducted**. For each calendar day thereafter a further 5 marks will be deducted. For work submitted seven calendar days after the submission deadline, a mark of 0 will be awarded.

Please refer to section 7 about what to do when there are justifiable reasons that you might submit work late.

MARKING SCALE

The marking scales that will be used for the assessments are listed below:

Generic Marking Criteria (Statistics and Bioinformatics assessment only)

| Grade | 0-20 point scale | 0-100 point scale | Criteria to be satisfied |
|-------|------------------|-------------------|--|
| A | 20 19 | 100 94 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work would be worthy of dissemination under appropriate conditions. ➤ Mastery of advanced methods and techniques at a level beyond that explicitly taught. ➤ Ability to synthesise and employ in an original way ideas from across the subject. ➤ In group work, there is evidence of an outstanding individual contribution. |

| | | | |
|---|-------|--------|---|
| | 18 | 89 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Excellent presentation. ➤ Outstanding command of critical analysis and judgement. |
| | 17 | 83 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Excellent range and depth of attainment of intended learning outcomes. ➤ Mastery of a wide range of methods and techniques. |
| | 16 | 78 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evidence of study and originality clearly beyond the bounds of what has been taught. |
| | 15 | 72 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In group work, there is evidence of an excellent individual contribution. ➤ Excellent presentation. ➤ Able to display a command of critical analysis and judgement. |
| B | 14 | 68 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attained all the intended learning outcomes for a unit. |
| | 13 | 65 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Able to use well a range of methods and techniques to come to conclusions. ➤ Evidence of study, comprehension, and synthesis beyond the bounds of what has been explicitly taught. |
| | 12 | 62 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Very good presentation of material. ➤ Able to employ critical analysis and judgement. ➤ Where group work is involved there is evidence of a productive individual contribution. |
| C | 11 | 58 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Some limitations in attainment of learning objectives, but has managed to grasp most of them. ➤ Able to use most of the methods and techniques taught. |
| | 10 | 55 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evidence of study and comprehension of what has been taught |
| | 9 | 52 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adequate presentation of material. ➤ Some grasp of issues and concepts underlying the techniques and material taught. ➤ Where group work is involved there is evidence of a positive individual contribution. |
| D | 8 | 48 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Limited attainment of intended learning outcomes. ➤ Able to use a proportion of the basic methods and techniques taught. |
| | 7 | 45 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evidence of study and comprehension of what has been taught, but grasp insecure. |
| | 6 | 42 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Poorly presented. ➤ Some grasp of the issues and concepts underlying the techniques and material taught, but weak and incomplete. |
| E | 5 | 35 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attainment of only a minority of the learning outcomes. ➤ Able to demonstrate a clear but limited use of some of the basic methods and techniques taught. ➤ Weak and incomplete grasp of what has been taught. ➤ Deficient understanding of the issues and concepts underlying the techniques and material taught. |
| | 1 - 4 | 7 - 29 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attainment of nearly all the intended learning outcomes deficient. ➤ Lack of ability to use at all or the right methods and techniques taught. ➤ Inadequately and incoherently presented. ➤ Wholly deficient grasp of what has been taught. ➤ Lack of understanding of the issues and concepts underlying the techniques and material taught. |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No significant assessable material, absent, or assessment missing a "must pass" component. |

All Other Assessments (Except Rotation Project Continuous Assessment)

90-100. Work of outstanding quality, showing exceptional knowledge and understanding, presented in a clear and focused manner. Outstanding command of critical analyses, judgment and synthesis of information and ideas from across the full subject range. Examples, structure, and detail are all of the highest standard.

- 80-89. Work of excellent quality that is fully comprehensive, logically presented with insightful examples. There is evidence of study, originality and insight beyond what has been taught. The work displays a command of critical analysis, judgment, and synthesis of information. Presentation is excellent.
- 70-79. Very good work that that is comprehensive, mostly accurate, logically presented with appropriate examples. There is evidence of study, comprehension and synthesis beyond what has been taught. Very good attainment of learning outcomes. The work displays sound critical analysis and judgment. Presentation is very good.
- 60-69. Good work that shows knowledge and understanding, mostly accurate and logical. There is evidence of study, comprehension and synthesis beyond what has been taught. All learning outcomes have been attained. The work displays critical analysis and judgment. Presentation is very good.
- 50-59. Work that is somewhat limited in its scope, but mainly accurate and logical. Some limitations in the attainment of learning outcomes. There is evidence of study and comprehension of what has been taught. Presentation is adequate.
- 40-49. Work that has a limited scope, with omissions and errors, but showing knowledge and understanding of the fundamental aspects of the subject, but with an insecure grasp. There has been limited attainment of learning outcomes. Presentation is poor.
- 30-39. The work has serious omissions or errors, showing a weak and incomplete grasp of what has been taught. Only a minority of learning outcomes have been attained.
- 20-29. The work is inadequate showing very little substance and is wholly deficient in its understanding. There are significant deficiencies in attainment of learning outcomes.
- 1-19. Errors serious and grave. Could also be a rather trivial response.

0. No significant assessable material.

Rotation Project Continuous Assessment

90-100. Work of outstanding quality, with exceptional intellectual input, organisation and planning, technical ability and independence.

80-89. Work of excellent quality, with excellent intellectual input, organisation and planning, technical ability and independence.

70-79. Work of very good quality, with very good intellectual input, organisation and planning, technical ability and independence. Very good attainment of learning outcomes.

60-69. Work of good quality, with good intellectual input, organisation and planning, technical ability and independence. All learning outcomes have been attained.

50-59. Work that is of sound quality, with some intellectual input, organisation and planning, sound technical ability and some independence. Some limitations in the attainment of learning outcomes..

40-49. Work that is limited in its scope, with rather little input, organisation and planning, technical ability or independence. There has been limited attainment of learning outcomes.

30-39. Work that has serious omissions or errors, with a weak and incomplete grasp of what is required. Only a minority of learning outcomes have been attained.

20-29. Work that is inadequate and wholly deficient. There are significant deficiencies in attainment of learning outcomes.

1-19. Work with serious and grave errors.

0. No significant assessable material or absent.

WORD LIMITS

You are set **strict** limits on the maximum length of your work and you will be penalised if you exceed them as described below.

| That exceeds the stated word limit by : | Penalty |
|---|---------------------------|
| Up to 10% | 10 marks deducted |
| Between 10% and 20% | 50 marks deducted |
| By over 20% | A mark of zero is awarded |

Although there are no penalties for being under the word limit, if you are significantly under (20% or more) you should consider the content you are including in your assessment.

Word limit checks will begin from the start of the introduction and continue to the end of the discussion. Word limit checks will not include references or text used in images but will include figure legends, titles, and tables.

7. INTERRUPTIONS TO STUDY DUE TO ILLNESS

Self-certification of absence due to illness during the teaching period

We understand that you might get ill or other circumstances might arise (for example, a family bereavement) which means that you might miss some of the compulsory, taught component of your course, or miss a deadline when work is due to be submitted. Here is what to do in these situations:

A. If you are absent for up to, and including, seven days then submit a [SELF-CERTIFICATION FOR ABSENCE FORM](#) to Ruth Batterham within two days of you returning. We will keep this form so that we have a record of student absences. We may follow-up repeated absences where we feel that these are impacting on your studies.

If you also think that your learning has been significantly affected, then you can also submit an [EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES FORM](#) to Ruth Batterham within two days of you returning. Also supply supporting evidence with this form, for example a medical certificate

B. If you are absent for more than seven consecutive days then submit an [EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES FORM](#) to Ruth Batterham within two days of you returning. Also supply supporting evidence with this form, for example a medical certificate. If your absence is for a non-medical reason, for example a family bereavement, then you do not need a medical certificate, however you may be required to supply documentation to confirm this.

C. If you are absent when there is a work submission deadline, then you need to request an extension to that deadline. Make this request using the [EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES](#)

[FORM](#) and supply supporting evidence. You must request an extension to that deadline from the Course Director, via Ruth Batterham, before the deadline. If you do not have an agreed extension and then submit work late, you will receive a penalty.

If there are exceptional circumstances (for example you are ill in hospital) that prevent you from submitting this form and requesting an extension ahead of the deadline, this will be taken into consideration by the Course Director.

Further information about absences and extenuating circumstances can be found in the [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes 2016/2017](#) and the [flow chart for notification of student absence and circumstance that have affected performance in assessment](#).

Note: For information about suspending your studies during the taught component, contact the local postgraduate team at your institution.

8. PROGRESSION AND DISCIPLINE

Please refer to the [Faculty of Biomedical Sciences Postgraduate Handbook 2016/2017](#) and the [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes 2016/17](#) for information about progression requirements and penalties. Further guidance can be found in the [University Examination Regulations](#). Students must adhere to all relevant regulations relating to their course.

For this taught course, you will complete assessments throughout the year. To pass the taught first year, you need to successfully complete each unit (pass mark of 50%). If you fail a unit you will be set additional assessed work. Additional set assessments will be offered during the year at key points, shortly following interim progress review meetings. There is no compensatory pass available if you fail the additional set assessment.

If you fail the additional set assessment you will have the opportunity to continue all units on the course, but will not obtain an MRes exit award and will not be allowed to progress into the second year of your studies.

An MRes exit award is only available if a student successfully completes 180 credit points and decides to or is required to leave the SWBio DTP programme before submission of the thesis. Students may be awarded an exit award of (i) a Diploma if they achieve 120 credit points or (ii) a Certificate if they achieve 60 credit points.

In order to proceed to year two, students must successfully complete 180 credit points. **Students must pass all of the taught course to be able to begin their second year of studies.** Students who do not achieve this are required to withdraw from the programme with an exit award, if appropriate.

As the MRes exit award is a University of Bristol course, students taking an exit award will graduate from the University of Bristol and be invited to attend the [graduation ceremony](#) in Bristol.

There will be a short period between submitting the Rotation Project 2 assessment and officially starting the second year. During this period, you will be notified whether you have provisionally progressed and you will be allowed to start your PhD project. **Official progression into the**

second year is dependent on the ratification of the marks by the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences Examination Board, University of Bristol.

If you fail an assessment(s) and the subsequent additional set assessments(s), and by so doing have not achieved the requisite credit points to allow you to progress, you will not be provided with the opportunity to undertake a 'supplementary year'. If students have failed an assessment, and have submitted an Extenuating Circumstances Form before the appropriate deadline, there may be the opportunity to undertake supplementary assessments. Dependent on the assessment, these supplementary assessments will either be undertaken at key points during the taught year or at the start of the second year, alongside the PhD project. Students will have not formally progress into the second year of studies until the supplementary assessment(s) have been passed and marks ratified by the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences Graduate Board.

9. PLAGIARISM

In academic writing, plagiarism is the inclusion of any idea or any text from someone else without giving due credit by citing and referencing that source in your work. This applies if the source is print or electronic, published or unpublished, or the work of another student or individual. Passages quoted or closely paraphrased from other authors must be identified as quotations or paraphrases, and the sources of the quoted or paraphrased material must be acknowledged. Use of unacknowledged sources may be construed as plagiarism.

Plagiarism constitutes a form of cheating and is treated as such by the University of Bristol. The [Rules and Regulations for Students](#) state clearly what constitutes plagiarism. It is your duty to read and understand this

Further information:

- [What is plagiarism and how to avoid plagiarism?](#)
- [Procedure for the treatment of cases of suspected plagiarism](#)

10. RULES AND REGULATIONS

The [Rules and Regulations for Students](#) contains valuable information on topics such as rights and responsibilities, academic matters, use of facilities, and other general information.

The [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes 2016/2017](#) contains valuable information on topics such as course structure and design, admission and study, forms and conduct of assessment, marking and the processing of marks, and regulation and policies for determining progress and awards.

You should take some time to read both these documents.

11. STUDENT INPUT

The University Guidelines state that one credit point is broadly equivalent to 10 hours of total

student input. This includes teaching, private study, revision and assessments. Therefore a 20 credit point unit will normally require 200 hours of student work.

The SWBio DTP wishes to ensure that paid work does not adversely affect the academic progress of its students. If you will be undertaking paid work, please consult with your supervisor, bearing in mind the impact that it may have on your studies. Please also take into account the SWBio DTP funder's (BBSRC) terms and conditions for paid work as indicated in the [RCUK Training Grant Guide](#).

12. STUDY AND TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

The Core Skills for Life Scientists unit trains students in transferable skills that will be applicable to a range of careers. This includes skills in:

- Project management
- Presentation
- Career development e.g. CV writing
- Communication

Advice about different careers are available from your local Careers Service:

[Bath >>](#)

[Bristol >>](#)

[Cardiff >>](#)

[Exeter >>](#)

[Rothamsted >>](#)

(Rothamsted link accessible only via Rothamsted's VPN using a Rothamsted laptop/computer. Alternatively e-mail donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk)

13. HELP FOR STUDENTS

Please refer to Annex 1 for further information about the help in place during your first taught year.

All students have a Personal Tutor (refer to section 4) who will be able to offer help and advice. The Course Director can also be contacted at any time by e-mail and a meeting arranged if needed. Lindsey Watson is able to provide non-academic pastoral support if needed.

Please visit your local institutional student help site for information about support and advice.

[Bath >>](#)

[Bristol >>](#)

[Cardiff >>](#)

[Exeter >>](#)

[Rothamsted >>](#)

(Rothamsted link accessible only via Rothamsted's VPN using a Rothamsted laptop/computer. Alternatively e-mail donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk)

14. ADDITIONAL COURSE COSTS

Any material required for your taught first year should be purchased through your Research Training and Support Grant (RTSG) in consultation with your supervisor.

15. COMPUTERS AND SOFTWARE

You will be provided with a laptop at the start of the taught first year which should be kept for the remainder of your studies. All necessary software for the taught course will be downloaded onto your laptop in advance of starting the course.

The laptop must be returned at the end of your studies to your main supervisor / Rothamsted supervisor.

To be able to access the internet at each of the sites, please ensure you have [eduroam](#) activated following your local institutional guidelines in advance of the taught units starting:

[Bath >>](#)

[Bristol >>](#)

[Cardiff >>](#)

[Exeter >>](#)

[Rothamsted >>](#)

Please refer to your local institution with regards to computing support.

[Bath >>](#)

[Bristol >>](#)

[Cardiff >>](#)

[Exeter >>](#)

[Rothamsted >>](#)

(Rothamsted link accessible only via Rothamsted's VPN using a Rothamsted laptop/computer. Alternatively e-mail donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk)

16. ADDITIONAL READING

Most lecturers will refer you to online resources for each lecture or group of lectures. You are **strongly advised** to set aside time to follow up these resources.

Lecturers may also recommend reading material relevant to the lectures. We DO NOT recommend that you buy these books. Copies of most of these titles are available in your institutional library and we recommend that you use the library copies as much as possible.

For the Statistics and Bioinformatics unit, you will be provided with the 'Data Analysis with R; A Guidebook for Scientists'. This textbook is to be returned following completion of your assessments to the designated contacts within your institution. **Failure to return your textbook will result in yourself incurring the charge for a new replacement.**

17. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

You will be required to travel as part of your taught units and depending on the location of your home institution, you may need to stay overnight. The SWBio DTP will support costs associated with travel and accommodation for the taught units.

Further information about accommodation arrangements and how to travel to the institutions can be found on [Blackboard](#) under 'General Information'.

CLAIMING EXPENSES

You will need to claim travel and subsistence expenses through the University of Bristol. Please follow the University of Bristol's policies for '[expense claims made by non-staff members](#)' and refer to the [Travel, Subsistence and Expenses Policy](#).

Further information about how to claim for expenses can be found on [Blackboard](#) under 'General Information'.

If you have any financial difficulties related to the travel and subsistence costs, please contact your local institutional student funding team for advice and support:

[Bath >>](#)

[Bristol >>](#)

[Cardiff >>](#)

[Exeter >>](#)

Rothamsted: E-mail Rres.finance@rothamsted.ac.uk

If you have any personal difficulties with travel or accommodation arrangements, please e-mail swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk.

18. FEEDBACK

It is important that you receive feedback on your work so that you can evaluate your performance and identify how you need to develop your knowledge and understanding in the future. Details on how feedback is available are outlined below.

Taught work: Work assigned during your taught units will be marked and feedback provided within three working weeks. If you are unclear on the feedback you receive or require further clarification, you should contact the Unit Director in the first instance.

Rotation projects: You will receive a mark for your report that will enable you to judge your performance. Marks and feedback will be provided within 7 working weeks of the deadline. The markers will also include some written comments on your report. Further feedback is always available from the member of staff who supervised the rotation project.

We aim to ensure that feedback is timely and useful whenever possible, but please remember that feedback is often a two-way process – feel free to seek clarification and further advice when required. You should take time to reflect on the feedback you receive and to identify areas where your performance could be improved.

19. APPEALS AND GRIEVANCES

The procedure for making an appeal against a decision made by the Faculty Board of

Examiners can be found on the University of Bristol's Secretary's Office web page in the [Rules and Regulations for Students](#).

The website above also details procedures for a student who wishes to make a complaint. In the first instance, informal complaints should be raised with Course Director at the earliest opportunity.

20. INFORMATION REGARDING THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

1. Membership of the Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners consists of the Course Director, the Unit Directors, an Implementation Group representative from each host institution and the External Examiner.

2. Appointment of External Examiners

An External Examiner is appointed to advise on all aspects of the taught course. The External Examiner is normally a senior member of staff in another University and is recommended for appointment after consultation amongst members of the Board of Examiners.

3. Role of External Examiner

The External Examiner comments on and approves all assessments and may scrutinise students' work. They are also provided with course synopses and have access to student records, and any other information that might be relevant to student performance.

4. Assessments

Assessments are set by the Course Director in consultation with the unit lecturers and Directors. The assessments are then scrutinised by the SWBio DTP Implementation Group and modified as required, before being sent to the External Examiner for approval (or further modification if necessary).

5. Marking of assessments

Assessments are marked independently by the appropriate staff, such as the unit lecturer, supervisor and moderated by the Unit Directors and/or Course Director.

6. Confidentiality

Marks from individual assessments and examiners' reports are confidential.

7. Final Examiners Meeting: awarding of marks and degree classification

The Final Examiners' meeting takes place in September. The External Examiner gives a verbal report, and makes recommendations on the final classification to the Board of Examiners (a full written report is submitted later to the Vice-Chancellor). This recommendation takes into account the average mark scored, the distribution of marks obtained by the student, and the External Examiner's own assessment of the student's work. The Board of Examiners then agrees a final mark list and recommendation for award, which is then passed to the Faculty

Examination Board.

8. Absences and Illness

Cases of illness or absence from some of the assessments, where an Extenuating Circumstances Form has been submitted, will be carefully considered by an Extenuating Circumstances Board. The Extenuating Circumstances Board will then make recommendations to the Board of Examiners. For the Board of Examiners, the marks of all assessments taken by the candidate are made available and a detailed account of the circumstances surrounding the case may be given consistent with confidentiality.

ANNEX 1: NETWORK OF SUPPORT FOR SWBIO DTP STUDENTS

Your Personal Tutor will be your local Implementation Group representative. These are as follows:

| Name | Institution | E-mail address | Telephone number |
|---|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Dr Steven Bates | University of Exeter | S.Bates@exeter.ac.uk | 01392 725174 |
| Prof Mark Lindsay | University of Bath | m.a.lindsay@bath.ac.uk | 01225 38 6783 |
| Dr Lianhai Wu | Rothamsted Research | lianhai.wu@rothamsted.ac.uk | 01837 883 572 |
| Prof Helen White-Cooper | Cardiff University | white-cooperh@cardiff.ac.uk | 029 2087 5492 |
| Dr James Hodge | University of Bristol | james.hodge@bristol.ac.uk | 0117 331 1400/1416 |
| Additional contact for students based in Penryn or Harpenden | | | |
| Dr Jon Blout | University of Exeter (Penryn) | J.D.Blout@exeter.ac.uk | 01326 371877 |
| Linda Field | Rothamsted Research (Harpenden) | lin.field@rothamsted.ac.uk | 01582 763133 |

You can contact your Personal Tutor via e-mail or telephone using the above contact details.

If you wish to raise a sensitive academic or personal issue and would not be comfortable with raising this with your Personal Tutor (if they are also part of your supervisory team), please raise it with your local Management Group representative. These are as follows:

| Name | Institution | E-mail address | Telephone number |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------|
| Prof Nick Smirnoff | University of Exeter | N.Smirnoff@exeter.ac.uk | 01392 725168 |
| Prof Robert Kelsh | University of Bath | bssrnk@bath.ac.uk | 01225 383828 |
| Prof Phil Murray | Rothamsted Research | phil.murray@rothamsted.ac.uk | 01837 883 545 |
| Prof Robert Honey | Cardiff University | Honey@cardiff.ac.uk | 029 2087 5868 |
| Prof Zafar Bashir | University of Bristol | z.i.bashir@bristol.ac.uk | 0117 331 1957 |

Alternatively you can contact Lindsey Watson, the non-academic pastoral support contact (refer to the contacts section at the beginning of the handbook).

