



PhD Studentship Competition 2012

Policy

We are delighted to announce the launch of the 2012 BU PhD Studentship competition for candidates starting in October 2012 in which there will be 44 studentships available across three parallel strands: (1) **Matched Funding**; (2) **Fully Funded**; and (3) **Education & Pedagogic Research**. An overview of the three strands is provided below.

The studentships will be awarded to supervisory teams on the basis of a competitive process across the whole of BU led by Professor Matthew Bennett (PVC Research, Enterprise & Internationalization) and managed the Graduate School. Applications will be assessed and awards made by a cross University Panel consisting of the academic members of UET and two members of the BU Professoriate. In selecting proposals for funding emphasis will be placed on the excellence of the research and quality of proposal in the first instance. Strategic fit with REF and Societal Impact will also be assessed.

Only the best projects in each strand will be funded and proceed to advert. Full details and criteria are set out in this Policy document. Staff are asked to check the eligibility criteria carefully before applying.

Applications (on the appropriate application form downloaded from the BU Research Blog) should be submitted to [Fiona Knight](#) (Graduate School Manager) **no later than 29 February 2012**, who will circulate to the judging panel for consideration. The panel will individually score each proposal and meet formally to select the successful projects.

Strand 1 – Matched Funded Studentships

- **A total of 32 matched funded studentships are available.**
- Matched-funding (50% equivalent to £21k over three years) may come from:
 - Industry/business partners,
 - Government and non-government organizations,
 - Academic Schools,
 - NHS,
 - Research Councils, or
 - Other external bodies.
- In seeking match-funding and developing the associated projects applicants are encouraged to avoid a local or regional focus.
- Priority may be given to applications that involve supervisors from two or more Schools and/or those from early career researchers.
- All proposals should match clearly to one of the eight BU Research Challenges.
- Applicants are encouraged to discuss potential applications to this funding strand with Deputy Dean Research or equivalent within their School.

Strand 2 – Fully-Funded Studentships

- **A total of 6 fully funded studentships are available.**
- These are exceptional awards for elite, highly original, timely and non-applied or “blue-sky” research projects where there is no potential for match funding. Priority will be given to those areas where there is a clear strategic driver for a particular REF Unit of Assessment, Group or Centre and/or the applicant can demonstrate an immense societal impact.
- All proposals should match clearly to one of the eight BU Research Challenges.
- Applicants are encouraged to discuss potential applications to this funding strand with Professor Matthew Bennett.

Strand 3 – Education and pedagogic research studentship

- **A total of 6 studentships with an educational or pedagogic focus are available.**
- Matched-funding (50% equivalent to £21k over three years) may come from:
 - Industry/business partners,
 - Government and non-government organizations,
 - Academic Schools,
 - NHS,
 - Research Councils, or
 - Other external bodies.
- Proposals must be able to demonstrate clearly how the research will benefit fusion within BU and have a wider impact on society or the HE sector.
- Priority may be given to applications that involve supervisors from two or more Schools and/or those from early career researchers.
- Applicants are encouraged to discuss potential application with Professor Tim McIntyre-Bhatty.

Details for all Studentships

All studentship projects should be linked to a REF Unit of Assessment as well as one of the eight BU Research Challenges. The proposed projects should be innovative, novel and applicants are encouraged to appeal to the imagination of the assessment panel in making their applications. A proposal writing workshop will be run early in February to assist applicants in writing their proposals; details will be published on the Research Blog. All applications must be endorsed by the applicants Line Manager and Head of Academic Group or Deputy Dean (Research).

The first supervisor should take responsibility for the applications and ensure that they meet the eligibility criteria set out below.

Studentships are offered on a stipend basis for 36 months only, with fees waived for the same period by the lead School. Fees will be charged after 36 months. Schools (or match funder) are responsible for providing each studentship with a guaranteed grant of between £3k and £5k over 36 months for use by the student to support fieldwork, consumables and conference travel. Normal studentship terms and conditions will apply. Note that these funds cannot be used to support BU staff to complete doctoral programmes.

Formative feedback on all unsuccessful applications will be provided to encourage proposal development. Appeals should be made to the PVC (Research, Enterprise and Internationalisation) via the Graduate School.

Once awarded all Studentships will be advertised and subject to a recruitment process managed and overseen by the Graduate School. Interviews should be held in line with BU policy - all interview panels will comprise the supervisory team, an independent member and be chaired by an independent Professor from the host Academic School. Interviews should refer to the interview form and person specification available from the Graduate School. Interviews should last no more than 30 minutes and all students should be given a tour of BU and School facilities by a PGR Student Academic Schools are responsible for paying interview expenses (normally second class rail travel) to candidates.

UEG approval of each candidate is required and formal offer letters will be issued by the Graduate School. Please note that this approval will be rigorously enforced and therefore no informal offers should be made at the time of interview. In order to make this a swift and trouble free process supervisors should make it absolutely clear on the nomination form how the selected candidate demonstrates (with evidence) that they are 'truly outstanding' and will justify the investment being made.

Funding from projects failing to recruit a suitable candidate prior to or at interview will be returned to the central studentship fund for reallocation. Projects will be advertised once and potential supervisors have an important role in ensuring that it is advertised on all relevant subject/sector specific bulletin boards or equivalent.

Supervisor Eligibility Criteria

All proposals should have a balanced supervisory team, with no supervisor supervising no more than 6 PGR students including this project.

The first supervisor, who must be a permanent member of academic BU staff, should complete the application. They must be an experienced supervisor (defined as having a current "certificate of supervision") and be research active, and be in consideration for the REF submission.

Candidate Eligibility Criteria

Candidates for a BU PhD studentship must demonstrate truly outstanding qualities and be motivated to complete a PhD in 3 years without fail.

All candidates must satisfy the University's minimum doctoral entry criteria for studentships of an honours degree at Upper Second Class (2.1) and/or an appropriate Masters degree.

An IELTS (Academic) score of 6.5 minimum is essential for candidates for whom English is not their first language.

In addition to satisfying basic entry criteria, BU will look closely at the qualities, skills and background of each candidate and what they can bring to their chosen research project in order to ensure successful completion and success. It is important to consider that in most cases the interpretation of 'truly outstanding' is likely to be those candidates with a First Class (Hons)

degrees and/or a distinction at Masters, with clear documented evidence of drive and commitment. If there are no suitable candidates that meet these criteria, projects should be released back to the central pool for re-allocation.

Applicants will be asked to submit an application form and a synopsis (500 words) outlining their understanding of the project for which they are applying, the approach they would envisage taking and what qualities they will bring to the research community.

Timetable

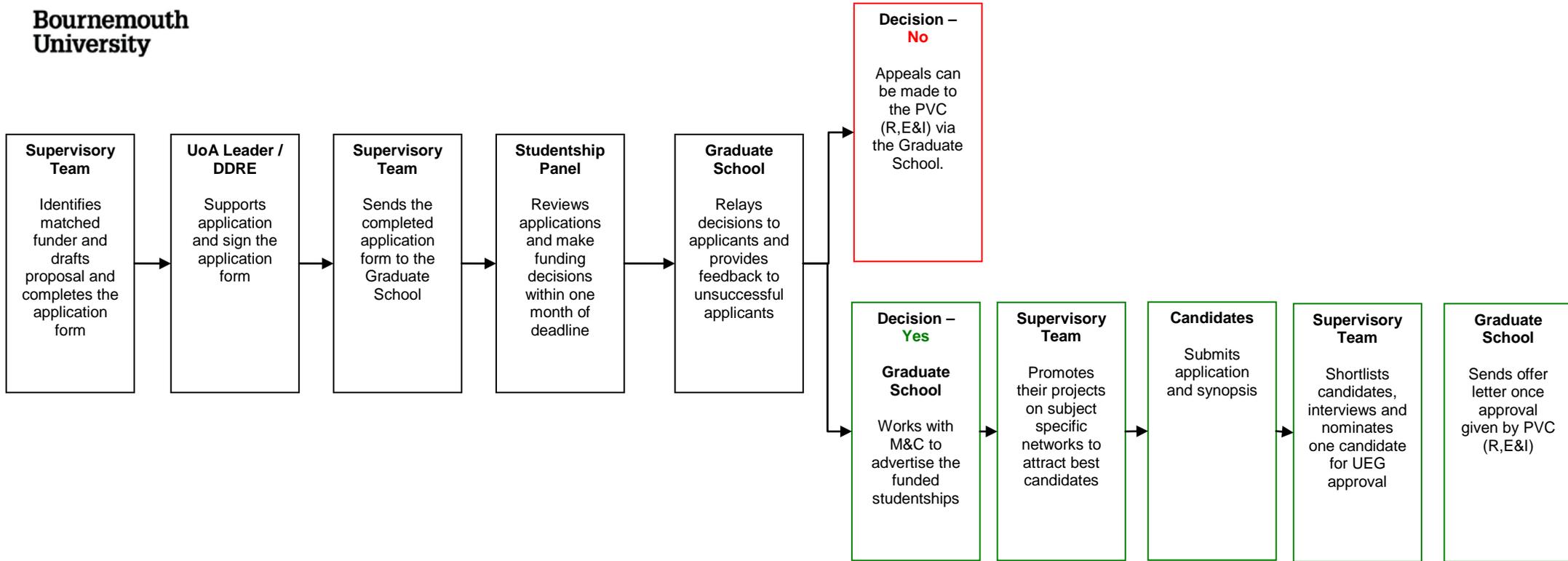
The Graduate School will manage the recruitment process along the following timetable:

December 2012	Launch internal competition to fund projects on Research Blog
12pm 29 February 2012	Deadline for submission of applications
<i>(week 2) March 2012</i>	Panel meeting to review applications
<i>(week 3) March 2012</i>	Supervisors to be informed of the panel decision
<i>(week 4) March 2012</i>	Launch external competition to find candidates
31 May 2012	Deadline for submission of applications
<i>(week 1&2) June 2012</i>	Interview short listed applicants
<i>(week 3) June 2012</i>	Approval of nominated candidates
<i>(week 3&4) June 2012</i>	Offer letters to nominated candidates
01 October 2012	Studentships Start
30 September 2015	Studentships End

All of the forms and further information on the scheme is available from the BU Research Blog.

The process map is shown below:

PhD Studentship Competition 2012 - Process



If you want to submit an application to the PhD Studentship Competition 2012, you must complete an application form (available from the BU Research Blog) and submit it to the Graduate School by **12pm on 29 February 2012**

- Strand 1 – Matched Funded – up to 32 studentships available
- Strand 2 – Fully Funded – up to 6 studentships available
- Strand 3 – Education & Pedagogic Research – up to 6 studentships available