CDE Handbook 2019-20

EngD in Digital Entertainment

Updated: 19/9/2019
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Welcome to the Centre for Digital Entertainment

Welcome to the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Centre for Doctoral Training in Digital Entertainment (CDE)! We hope that you’ll have an enjoyable and worthwhile time with us. It is our aim to help you achieve your full potential as a CDE student.

The University of Bath Doctoral College Handbook 2019/20 is for all doctoral students at the University starting in the academic year 2019/20. Along with this handbook it provides everything you need to know about getting started with your research, making progress through your studies and getting the most out of your time here.

This CDE handbook sets out additional key information about the CDE Engineering Doctorate (EngD) in Digital Entertainment programme.

If there’s anything you can’t find, or you have suggestions/corrections please do get in touch.

Peter Hall
CDE Director
The CDE staff team

Directors/ Co-directors

Professor Peter Hall
University of Bath
Director

Prof Jian Zhang
Bournemouth University
Co-Director

The CDE director and co-directors provide academic direction to the CDE. They are responsible for determining the breadth of the areas that CDE students study and the suitability of company placements.

The directors interact with the EPSRC funding body so that CDE can respond appropriately to a variable funding landscape.

Centre Manager
The CDE Centre Manager is responsible for running the CDE on a day to day basis. This includes budget control, inter-site (Bath, Bournemouth) relationships, communications, organising management meetings, and staff management.
The Centre Manager represents the CDE at meetings and events, liaises with industry, and writes reports on CDE progress for the funding body.

**Research Project Manager/Co-ordinator**

Sarah Parry  
Research Project Co-ordinator (Bath)

Dr Mike Board  
Research Project Manager (Bournemouth)

The research project manager /co-ordinator lead on student recruitment and retention, facilitate company partnerships, liaise with industry partners and academics, and negotiate placement agreements.
Event Co-ordinators

Becca Knight
Events Coordinator (p/t)
(Bath)

Zoe Leonard
Events Coordinator
(p/t)(Bournemouth)

The Events Coordinators are responsible for CDE event organisation and are involved with day-to-day procurement and travel arrangements.
They also run the CDE website, blog and social media accounts.
See Communication below
CDE Governance

CDE Project Board
The CDE Project Board includes representatives from research engineers (RE’s) and the EPSRC. It meets three times a year, usually alternating between Bath and Bournemouth. Student reps represent the CDE cohort at the board and raise general issues on behalf of all students.

Professional Advisory Board
A Professional Advisory Board, with representatives from our partner companies and sector bodies, helps guide our development.

All of the CDE management team will respond to you and we are always pleased to hear from you, about your successes as well as to answer your questions.
About the CDE

The CDE is an EPSRC funded Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) specialising in Digital Entertainment. It was founded by Professor Phil Willis and Professor Jian Zhang in 2009 as a joint venture between the University of Bath and Bournemouth University.

The EPSRC is part of UK Research and Innovation. It is the main funding body for engineering and physical sciences research in the UK. They invest in research and postgraduate training to help build the knowledge and skills base needed to address the scientific and technological challenges facing the nation.

Digital technology companies are an important and growing part of the UK economy. The CDE was created in response to the training need identified by government and the sector. It also helps extend the research capacity of those businesses, encouraging innovation through a supported programme of collaboration with academia.

In phase 1 the EPSRC provided £6.3 million to part fund 50 studentships. University and industrial contributions make up the remainder of the funding. The Council awarded a further
£4.8 million in 2013 to the Centre so for an additional 50 studentships.

The 2019/20 cohort will be the last intake of the programme.

**Industrial Partnerships**

We currently have over **40 live projects** with industrial partners, and you can find more details on the website of the x Alumni who are now taking senior positions within industrial partner companies and wider UK industry sectors. A third of them remained with their partner companies.

**About the Engineering Doctorate (EngD)**

The Engineering Doctorate (EngD) is a four-year programme that combines PhD-level research projects with taught courses, and students spend about 75 percent of their time working directly with a company.

By being in a company for the three research years, REs gain exceptional industry-leading skills and research results can be quickly absorbed and utilised by the company, supporting its growth and development. This makes for a rewarding mix of classic University research and fast impact on the commercial world.

This pattern of training – a taught first year followed by three years of research – leads to an EngD degree. The title reflects the practical nature and application of the research and the academic standard is identical to that for a PhD.
Like a PhD, a successful EngD will need to demonstrate innovative research leading to papers in high-quality academically-refereed outlets.

An EngD project should weave practical and professional experience with the research itself and demonstrate the impact of the new knowledge or IP generated.
The CDE EngD Programme structure

Both Universities have developed first year programmes for the CDE EngD in Digital Entertainment. For practical reasons they differ in content and delivery while covering similar territory.

The University of Bath’s Online Programme and Unit catalogues at University of Bath Programme and Unit Catalogues has details of the Bath programme.

The programme begins with a taught first year at Master’s-level. The purpose of the taught component is to equip CDE students with the wider background they need to become REs who contribute positively to product development.

The teaching programme is open to the influence of external partners. This is most obvious in the summer projects, which allow partners to have a direct voice on the topic. Partners are encouraged to suggest problem areas for study and in this way proto-type projects prior to placement.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Stage in Programme</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
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<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Taught MSc</td>
<td>6 month Progress Reports</td>
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<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Research Phase with Industrial placement</td>
<td>6 month Progress Report</td>
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<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>10,000 word Report</td>
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<td>6 month Progress Report</td>
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<td>Year 4</td>
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<td>6 month Progress Report</td>
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**Year 1 - MSc Human Computer Interaction**

The 90-credit taught component of the programme comprises the Master’s level units of the [MSc in Human Computer Interaction](#). The course lasts 1 year. It starts in September 2019 and ends in 2020. More details of the course will be provided by the Director of Studies during Induction Week.
The MSc Programme is designed to provide the material needed for the EngD in Digital Entertainment students, while also permitting other students to take it as a stand-alone degree.

Woven through the taught year is a growing emphasis on understanding research, culminating in a research-led summer project.

**Semester 1**

The first semester (October to January) covers a range of skills found in all of our company sectors. It is a demanding course. However we strongly encourage you to take active steps to join the academic community, including attending departmental seminars and reading groups.

The CDE also holds a winter event in December. This year it is in London on the 19th December. This will bring the whole cohort together as well as providing training on an area of relevance.

We also encourage you to start thinking about your research direction as early as possible. The research project coordinator will meet with you regularly to help you with this. See Finding an Industrial Partner below.

**Semester 2**

During the second semester (February to May) REs specialise more, reflecting the needs of the research phase and prepare for their summer research project. For the EngD students, this project is the opportunity to work with an academic
supervisor and ideally your industrial partner to set the agenda for the research programme in years 2-4.

**MSc Research Project**
Over the summer period REs will be wholly focussed on research, aiming to have a direction which will give a good start to the company placement.

To continue on to the EngD programme you will need an average mark of 60% or over on the taught programme. The taught Master’s pass mark is 50%; the requirement to pass at a higher standard for continuation is to help ensure that you are able to achieve as a research student.

**Managing your professional development**
Throughout the EngD programme, REs have free access to all Doctoral Skills workshops and online learning at the University of Bath. You are strongly encouraged to use the resources available to identify your professional development needs and to develop the skills and knowledge you are going to need at different stages of your doctorate: [Managing your professional development - a guide for doctoral students](#)

In addition to the training at the University of Bath, REs are able to take short courses at the Centre for Excellence in Media Practice at Bournemouth University.
Year 2-4 Research Phase

Academic Milestones

Candidature
Once your research project has been identified details of the project and of the supervisory arrangements are submitted on a Candidature form.

The form is completed by the student, academic supervisor and Director of Studies via the University’s online Student and Applicant Management Information System (SAMIS): The form is normally submitted within one month of the start of year 2.

Further information is available on the University of Bath website, in Guidance and Forms for Doctoral Students:

Progress Reports
Progress reports are required every six months. Again these are submitted via SAMIS and more information is available on the University website.

Confirmation
The end of the second year is a key milestone for the CDE EngD in Digital Entertainment. First, REs must have completed the required taught credits and research integrity training by this point. Normally this will be done in Year 1 so any missing credits must be completed in Year 2.

For Confirmation, REs must submit a 10,000 word report setting out research achievements to date and outlining the
research direction for the next two years to a Progression Board of Examiners.

A **data management plan** must also be in place.

There is an oral examination and the Board will also consider the RE’s skills training record and statements on progress from supervisors.

The progression report is like any other piece of examined coursework, in that there is a deadline to be met and a formal progression point for continuing to Year 3.

More details of what is required is available at Appendix 5 of the [University of Bath Quality Assurance Code of Practice on Research Degrees](#).

**Thesis**

Full details of the specification for the thesis can be found in Appendix 6 of the [University of Bath QA Code of Practice on Research Degrees](#).

It is strongly recommend that writing up starts 9 months before submission (month 40 onwards) and that the final 6 months (month 43 onwards) is set aside for writing up and not much else.

REs should work closely with academic supervisors throughout the writing up process.
Industrial placement

Following the first year taught programme and supervised research project each student will undertake up to three years supervised research based in an external partner company.

Finding an industrial partner

Finding a company placement is a joint activity between the student, their academic supervisor(s) and the CDE staff.

The contractual arrangements between the University and the industrial partner can take months to finalise, so planning for potential placements should start as soon as possible in Year 1.

You will meet the Research Project Co-ordinator regularly to discuss and clarify your research direction, and to identify potential industrial partners.

The CDE contact companies on behalf of students but we strongly encourage students and/or their academic supervisors to identify potential suitable companies.

An industrial partner must have:

- an active R&D function,
- the expertise to provide an industrial supervisor,
- financial stability, including an agreed financial contribution to CDE over the duration of the placement.

Companies will normally be based in the UK.
Placements are normally in place during Year 2, ideally at the beginning but normally sometime during that year. EPSRC requirements for an EngD are that there is at minimum a 50% placement so in the event that a placement is not secured by the end of Year 2 there is a range of exit options from the EngD programme, including masters and PhD programmes, subject to approval by the Director or Co-Director.

Students are encouraged to be as flexible as possible with respect to company partners and specific R&D projects.

A student will be interviewed and their skills may be assessed by a company to determine their suitability for a specific R&D project. We ask you to create and maintain a CV and provide access to training and advice on preparing for interview.
CDE-Company Contract

CDE placements are based on a contract between the University and the industrial partner. The contract sets out details of the financial contribution, confidentiality and publication, intellectual property rights and so on, as well as clarifying the terms on which RE’s are in the company.

For the duration of the placement students are still registered at the University and are not employed by the company.

Students are not party to this contract. However they need to sign a deed of assignment covering IP and confidentiality.

Students should not make any substantial arrangements for the placement such as committing to accommodation until it has been confirmed that the contract between the University and the company has been signed, as this process can take some time.

The Students’ Union has a Placements Hub which includes a map of students on placement, which can help REs contact other Bath students looking for accommodation for placements.
Research plan

Once a student, supervisor and company have been matched, a written plan for the project must be submitted to the CDE management team.

The plan is written by the academic supervisor, to the brief of the company, and with strong input by the Research Engineer.

A Research Plan says:

- who is on the project
- what will be done
- how it will be done
- when it will be done
- includes submission date

A Research plan helps:

- the RE keep on track
- management to monitor
- mitigates against known problems

The plan is intended to mitigate problems of remote supervision. It should be intended to last three years and include aims and objectives, and deadlines and deliverables. It should describe the literature gap and the pathway to impact.

The plan must include a schedule of meetings, both remotely and face-to-face. It must include provision for the student to attend CDE events and to write-up both a
transfer report and a final thesis or portfolio. A skeletal template is found in Appendix A.

**Supervisory arrangements**

REs are supported by a supervisory team:

- a lead academic supervisor from the University of Bath and
- one or more industrial supervisors from the partner company.

The team may include secondary academic supervisors (from either university) who have particular specialities that can benefit the project.

The aim of establishing a supervisory team is to ensure that each student has access to a breadth of experience and knowledge, not only across their discipline but also for general research training and support. The supervisory team also acts as a mutual support group, to ensure that the company and university partners fully understand what each is expecting.

The supervisors guide the RE in planning and delivering the research project.

The industrial supervisor will advise on the strategic importance and industrial relevance of the work.

The academic supervisor should ensure the work meets the requirements of the degree and that there is sufficient
awareness and depth of understanding demonstrated in research outputs.

Supervisors should give REs achievable targets and clear guidance on milestones.

**Meetings**

In years 2 - 4 we recommend that REs make contact with the lead academic supervisor once a week (including via telephone or Skype) and meet face to face once a month. We recommend that REs and industrial supervisors meet weekly.

A three way meeting of the supervisory team should take place:

- Via Skype at least once a month
- Face-to-face at least once a quarter.

It is normally the responsibility of the RE to schedule the meetings, and it is best practice for the RE to keep a record of each meeting and to take notes at these meetings as they occur.

**Key responsibilities**

**The Academic Supervisor:**

- Guides the RE’s research agenda
- Advises on the doctoral worth of research agenda (regarding novelty and literature)
- Advises on depth of understanding and analysis
- Ensures the RE has had relevant university inductions
• Guides the RE on choice of taught units and relevant professional training
• Approves spend on the RE’s Training Support Fund
• Regularly meets with RE and industrial supervisor to monitor and record progress*
• Guides the RE on the production of the thesis/portfolio including suitability of evidence

The Industrial Supervisor:
• Guides the RE’s research agenda
• Advises on strategic importance and industrial relevance of work
• Ensures the RE has had relevant company induction
• Ensures the RE is aware of the company’s expectations regarding conduct and what material is suitable for disclosure to the public sphere
• Ensures company colleagues fully understand the nature of the RE’s role as a research student embedded in a company who is not an employee
• Clears the RE’s presentations to external audiences
• Guides the RE on choice of taught units and professional development to fill skills gaps
• Regularly meets with the RE and academic supervisor to monitor and record progress*
• Allows the RE time to attend conferences and do coursework. Time spent on these are an integral part of the programme and do not count as leave.
• Approves leave in consultation with the academic supervisor

**Personal professional development**

REs should continue to attend relevant training sessions during their research phase as well as masterclasses organised by the CDE, partner companies, and external organisations. These are not assessed but form an important part of the doctoral training programme and should be recorded in the Progress Reports.

Students are asked to update the Event Co-ordinator regularly with details of any training or development they undertake.

You are strongly encouraged to provide feedback on any training or event you attend, so the team can ensure it meets the needs of students individually and as a cohort.

**Research Fish**

Research Fish is an online survey that collects research outcomes so that the EPSRC can track the impacts of their investments. Providing details of the outputs produced during your doctoral research is a condition of your scholarship funding.

Research Councils apply sanctions on the University for non-compliance, preventing future students from benefitting from scholarship funding. You will need to provide this information every year until three years after your studentship has finished, and the EPSRC will contact you ahead of the annual submission period using your University email address.
Problem solving

The EngD is a complex academic research programme with a variety of stakeholders. This can lead to issues that need to be resolved by dialogue between the parties. If concerns arise that cannot be dealt with locally by supervisors, please contact the CDE staff.

There are also regular meetings between staff and student representatives where student issues can be raised and discussed. CDE student reps are elected at the start of each year.

Finances and leave

Stipend

Stipends are paid quarterly in advance at the EPSRC national minimum rate for Research Engineers (REs) undertaking an Engineering Doctorate (EngD): EPSRC Minimum payments. Student stipends are tax-free.

Students in a company placement are paid up to an additional £4,000 stipend per year (pro-rata), where the company is making an appropriate contribution to the University. There will be no top-up when a student is not in placement or where the host organisation is not making a direct financial contribution to the University.

CDE students with a placement within the boundaries of the Greater London Authority are eligible for an additional stipend of £2,000 per year, in line with Research Council practice. The London Weighting will only apply during the placement period (normally years 2-4).
Leave entitlement
Details of leave entitlement for doctoral students are available in the *Doctoral College Handbook* (page 18). Fulltime doctoral students are entitled to 25 working days’ holiday in any 12-month period, in addition to days on which the University is closed.

The timing of leave must be negotiated with the academic supervisor and, during placement, the industrial supervisor. During the taught element of the course, leave should be taken during the inter-semester breaks only.

Details of other leave, including maternity, paternity and adoption leave for research students is also in the Handbook. Please note that the industrial partner company can keep a record of the leave days taken.

Training Support Fund
REs have a generous Training Support Fund (TSF) of £10,000 for the duration of the EngD. The fund may be used to:

- attend conferences and events
- buy appropriate equipment
- pay for other activities supporting the research.

The academic supervisor must approve any expenditure and is responsible for ensuring the University’s processes and standards are followed.
The TSF will be allocated a unique project code at the beginning of the year to which any expenditure can be charged through the University’s finance system, Agresso.

It is important that REs discuss the budget with supervisors on a regular basis. In particular, known expenses such as conferences should be planned ahead of time. Following attendance at any event, a brief written report (including photos where possible) should be submitted to the CDE Events Co-ordinator outlining how the event is relevant to the research. Elements of these reports will be used to update the website/blog and as case studies for EPSRC.

Travel
The University of Bath’s travel agent is Clarity. It is not possible to use other travel agents through the University. For group travel, where CDE is sending multiple people, the Events Coordinator will normally arrange everything and then charge it to the appropriate TSFs. For travel insurance, please see University of Bath Insurance Services.

Reclaiming expenses
Reasonable minor expenses (for example, food and drink while travelling on project-related business, and rail travel to meetings) can be claimed by REs and academic supervisors in keeping with University policy (Travel, subsistence & expenses). All claims must be supported by receipts.

Expenses are claimed through the University’s finance system, Agresso (Business World On). Instructions on how to make a claim are at: Business World On 2018 Guidance.
Prepayment of larger expenses
The Centre can cover up-front costs for expensive items such as conference registration, hotel reservations, etc.

If you would like the Centre to make a purchase this way, please contact the CDE Events Co-ordinator in plenty of time. Conferences and air tickets are usually much cheaper if booked well in advance.

Computer equipment
Any equipment purchases by REs must be approved in advance by the academic supervisor. Only very minor purchases such as cables or memory sticks are acceptable to buy and reclaim as an expense.

Do not buy any substantial equipment yourself and then expect to reclaim it! The University has specific suppliers and all orders must be made through the University processes.

Our IT Support Manager, Keir Mobbs (Room 3:52), can order computer equipment on behalf of the RE and charge it to the appropriate TSF.

All goods, including laptops that have been purchased on the CDE grant, are the property of the University of Bath and need to be returned on completion of the project.
International visits

The CDE can provide up to an additional £5,000 per student for an international visit of one month or longer, such as visiting another division of a host company or a university overseas. Further details are available at Centre for Digital Entertainment Documents.

Annual Events and Student-led Activities

The CDE holds at least one annual event where all students are expected to showcase their research to an invited audience of academics, researchers and industry leaders. The cost of annual events is met from the central CDE grant rather than TSFs. Host companies must allow time for REs to attend conferences and do coursework. Time spent on these are an integral part of the programme and do not count as leave.

Students are also encouraged to arrange events themselves, such as a Coding Retreat, ResJam or Writing Retreat.

Public Engagement

Public Engagement is an important part of public-funded research. Students are encouraged to undertake public engagement training and planning prior to a range of events they may participate in such as Bath Taps Into Science, BFX The Cheltenham Science Festival and Images of Research.

Grant Reference

If work is published or presented, please reference the funding provided by the EPSRC by quoting their grant reference number: EP/L016540/1.
Contacting Us

In person
The CDE team welcome email, phone-calls and drop-ins. University core hours are 10am-12 noon and 2pm-4pm, CDE part time staff hours are recorded on the CDE website and email, and you can check our availability on our calendars.

During the first year you will be invited to regular meetings with the Research Project Co-ordinator. You are welcome to email or drop in for a meeting at any other time.

Email
The CDE and the University will send all communications to a student’s Bath email account, not to a personal or company email account. It is your responsibility to read this regularly and respond within a reasonable time frame.

There is a mailing list for Bath and Bournemouth students which also includes our key members of staff: cde-students@lists.bath.ac.uk.

Web Site
Our Contacts page lists all of the CDE staff and how to contact us.

Blog
The Centre for Digital Entertainment runs a blog and news pages in order to share news and events on the CDE website. These are managed by the Events Coordinators.
Please get in touch with them to share your successes, travel or news items. All ideas are welcome!

**Twitter**
The Centre has an active Twitter account. You can follow us @centre_digi_ent.

**Facebook**
There is a CDE student only Facebook group:
[CDE students Facebook group](#)

Revised and updated September 2019
Appendix A Research Project Plan Template

*(From the CDE Guidance for Industrial Supervisors).*

This section contains a template for a written project plan in the form of headings and explanatory text. It is based largely on the case for support documents as required by EPSRC for grant applications.

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<th>Project Title</th>
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<td>List the team too.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Synopsis</th>
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<tr>
<td>Explain the project in very broad terms, including what motivates the partner and why CDE should have an interest.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Aims and Objectives</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clearly state the aim of the project, and the objectives that act as constraints.</td>
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<th>Prior art and Planned Contributions</th>
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<td>Explain the background to the project. Identify the contributions to the literature that the work should</td>
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yield. It is not always possible to be precise, but the general form of the contribution should be described.

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<th>Method</th>
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<tr>
<td>Here the broad working methods are described. Does the project comprise a sequence of related steps, or is it to be a collection of more loosely related projects?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Work Plan</th>
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<tr>
<td>In as much detail as possible, specify a set of milestones, deliverables, and time frames. Allow for writing up and for a transfer report. Be sure to include references to publication ambitions, and to describe a mechanism for transferring IP from the research into the partner’s working environment, as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Include an outline of the responsibilities of team members and a diary of meetings. REs are recommended to make contact with each supervisor at least weekly, be this separately or in a joint session (which can be via remote means). The entire supervisory team and the RE should meet together at least quarterly to review progress and next steps.

| Resources Required |
Say what computer, cameras *etc.* will be required. Include a reference to visits by the student to conferences and CDE events.

**Resources Required**
Say what computer, cameras *etc.* will be required. Include a reference to visits by the student to conferences and CDE events.

**Other**
Here include any additional information of relevance. For example, CDE encourages and has funds to support international visits. If that has been discussed and an agreement reached, include it here.