



## Guidance for Statement of Contribution

As stated in the [College's MPhil/PhD regulations](#), the thesis must consist of the candidate's own account of his/her investigations, the greater proportion of which must have been undertaken during the period of registration under supervision for the degree; The part played by the candidate in any work done jointly with the supervisor(s) and/or fellow research workers must be clearly stated by the candidate and certified by the candidate and supervisor.

The Statement of Contribution is the mechanism by which the work done jointly with the supervisor(s) and/or fellow research workers can be articulated and certified by the candidate and supervisor.

### General Purpose

To outline any work done jointly to contribute to the thesis and to fairly represent the contribution from all parties. This statement therefore demonstrates the candidates understanding of the importance of [research integrity](#) and supports the examiners to determine the extent of the original contribution to knowledge from the candidate. Detailed statements of contributions should be considered for any group/ joint research projects (or aspects of projects such as analysis) where candidates have worked jointly with other parties for all or some parts of the research presented in the thesis.

If the candidate is not certain if a statement of contribution is required they can seek advice from their supervisor or the [Birkbeck Graduate Research School \(BGRS\)](#), and in some instances the examiners may suggest that such a statement is appropriate following the discussion in the viva or a second review of the corrected thesis.

This detailed statement of contribution is required in addition to the short formal acknowledgement which may include thanks for personal support networks, for minor contributions, e.g. where a publisher has made available a measure free of charge, and often includes a thanks to supervisors (who are expected to regularly review candidates' work as a matter of course). It is not unusual for the people who are listed in the statement of contribution to also be included in the personal acknowledgement statement.

It is recognised that joint working is a valid part of a PhD programme and there is no inherent detriment to a PhD thesis from the inclusion of a statement of contribution. Indeed, clearly articulating the contribution of others demonstrates a good understanding of the importance of research integrity; conversely, deliberately misrepresenting the work of others constitutes research misconduct.

## Guiding principles

- a) Outline chapter by chapter if the chapter was the candidate's own contribution, or, where there is joint working, clearly state the respective contribution of all parties.
- b) Acknowledge any direct contributors (and the level of their contribution) clearly.
- c) Give a clear explanation of the level of any contributions at all stages of the research process as necessary:
  - I. Formulation of ideas/ hypotheses
  - II. Provision of material/ stimuli
  - III. Generation of data
  - IV. Analysis of data
  - V. Anything other aspect which merit a clear statement.
- d) To state the level of contribution clearly explain e.g. which part of any data collection or analysis was undertaken by the candidate, which part by a collaborator, which part was genuine joint working where it is impossible to separate out individual contributions? If you are not clear how to present this information your supervisor or examiner should be able to advise or suggest someone who can help.
- e) It is expected that any statement of contribution is submitted to all examiners, may be questioned during any viva examination, and is published as part of the thesis.
- f) A typical statement of contribution is ca. 1 page in length but there is no space restriction and if more space is required this should be taken. The statement should be signed by both the student and the supervisor.

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