



Eliminating barriers to postgraduate
research study in the West Midlands



BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

PROJECT BRIEF

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PORTFOLIO REVIEW

THAT'S ME!

ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDY
IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

This document outlines a project brief for
student secondments

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AIM

This project aims to evaluate Birmingham City University’s (BCU) postgraduate research (PGR) project portfolio to identify themes, trends and disciplinary differences, with a specific focus on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in the context of That’s Me!

OUTLINE

This project will evaluate, using thematic analysis and corpus linguistic techniques, existing PGR project titles and abstracts (around 800 projects referred to as “the portfolio”). It will systematically analyse the language and content of the portfolio to uncover dominant research areas, trends, and disciplinary differences, with a key focus on determining the extent to which the portfolio

focuses on matters relating to EDI. The thematic analysis will classify and interpret the central themes of the projects, while corpus linguistics will provide quantitative insights into the frequency and context of key terms associated with EDI. Findings will be compiled in a report that presents the thematic distribution of research topics, trends, gaps, and discipline-based profiles.

The project is expected to have 3 phases:

- 1. Gather and prepare the portfolio for analysis.
- 2. Systematically analyse the language and content of the PGR project portfolio through thematic analysis and corpus linguistics.
- 3. Compile findings into a report, including appropriate infographics.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1. How can EDI be coded and analysed in the portfolio?
- 2. What are the dominant research themes present in the portfolio?
- 3. To what extent does the portfolio address EDI matters?
- 4. What trends can be identified in the thematic distribution of BCU’s PGR research projects between disciplines and over time?
- 5. What gaps or underrepresented areas exist in the portfolio relating to EDI?

METHODS

This project will evaluate, using thematic analysis and corpus linguistic techniques, existing PGR project titles and abstracts (around 800 projects referred to as “the portfolio”). It will systematically analyse the language and content of the portfolio to uncover dominant research areas, trends, and disciplinary differences, with a key focus on determining the extent to which the portfolio

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OUTCOMES

- 1. A comprehensive and organised dataset.
- 2. An equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) coding framework.
- 3. A report on themes, trends and gaps.
- 4. Discipline based profiles.

INDICATIVE TIMELINE AND MILESTONES

This table below provides indicative expectations as the project progresses through its main phases. This can be negotiated with the Research Assistant as relevant to their time commitment and project progress. The period will be scaffolded with support and engagement opportunities.

Date	Activity
June 17	Induction/prepare analysis
June 14	Prepare analysis
July 1-22	Analyse content
July 22 - 29	Produce report