

AHRC

Training Grant

Funding Guide 2025



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Version control table

Version Number	Status	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
Version 3.0	Updated	January 2020	Alignment with UKRI Training Grant terms and conditions
Version 4.0	Updated	May 2025	Updates related to Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships. Content for DTP1 and CDT awards has been removed. Duplication of UKRI T&Cs and Guidance has been removed.

1 Introduction: The Purpose of this Guide

This guide should be read alongside the [UK Research and Innovation \(UKRI\) Standard Terms and Conditions of training grants and the UKRI Training grant Guidance](#).

This guide sets out any additional AHRC-specific conditions for the management of AHRC-funded training grants alongside AHRC's expectations regarding the use of our funding for postgraduate students. It applies to all AHRC studentships supported through Doctoral Training Partnership 2 awards (DTP2) and Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDPs) and Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs). These will collectively be referred to as 'Training grants' throughout this document.

At the time of awarding, DTP2, CDP and most CDA awards, were expected to implement the [AHRC's Research Training Framework for Doctoral Students](#) and this requirement has not changed. However, award holders should consider how they might also meet the [UKRI's Statement of expectations for doctoral training](#).

For awards which are recruiting students, please also refer to the [UKRI good practice principles in recruitment and training at a doctoral level](#).

Any changes to our rules, regulations or procedures will apply to all studentships unless otherwise stated. They will be indicated in the version control table at the beginning of this guide.

In case of queries about AHRC doctoral investments, please email skills@ahrc.ukri.org.

1.1 Definitions

1.1.1 Definition of collaborative awards

Collaborative Doctoral Partnership is the name of the scheme and awards within it are CDPs. These are awards to non-Higher Education Institutions (non-HEIs) and the awards are for a notional number of studentships. Through an annual competition, CDPs identify the HEI partner organisations which will be in receipt of these studentships. The student funding is issued to the HEIs as Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs). Where this document is referencing student funding etc, CDAs will be referenced. Where the issue is scheme-specific conditions, we will reference CDPs.

There are CDA awards within DTPs but, **all references to CDAs are CDP/CDAs, unless otherwise specified**. Reference to CDAs within DTPs is 'DTP/CDA'.

1.1.2 AHRC's definition of research

Please refer to the Research Funding Guide for AHRC's definition of research, including practice-led research: <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ahrc-research-funding-guide/>.

1.1.3 The AHRC's definition of research training

The AHRC uses 'research training' in its broadest sense to describe the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will need to successfully pursue their studies, complete a high-quality thesis, and start a career. AHRC does not prescribe the type of training or how it should be delivered. 'Training' includes all formal and informal opportunities for postgraduate students to develop as researchers, practitioners, and highly qualified individuals for various careers.

AHRC considers training a continuous process throughout a student's studies, adapting as new needs arise.

Student needs should be monitored and assessed regularly. The focus is on assessing individual researcher needs and providing relevant training.

Please see the AHRC's [Research Training Framework for Doctoral Students](#) for further guidance.

Annex A of this guide offers additional information and advice on collaborative research training.

1.1.4 The Role of the Supervisor

A student's primary supervisor and co-supervisors (where applicable) play a key role in supporting their research, professional development and overall project progress. AHRC expects Training grant award holders to ensure supervisors understand AHRC and UKRI expectations and available training opportunities for students.

Supervisors should be familiar with all UKRI and AHRC documents mentioned in this guide's introduction.

AHRC supports co-supervision between disciplines and institutions. Co-supervision is mandatory for Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs).

All supervisors must be recorded in Je-S Student Details when such arrangements exist.

2 Funding

2.1 Fund headings

Each grant will include one or more of the following fund headings.

2.1.1 Stipend

The stipend fund heading includes students' stipend payments for the duration of the grant.

For **DTP2 and CDP3 and 4**, funding is calculated based on a studentship duration of four years full-time and will be profiled over a four-year period. The four-year duration is to enable the Training grant to support students to undertake development activities as part of their doctoral study.

For **CDP2**, awards are for three and a half years with payments profiled over four years. The final six months of funding is spread over four quarters of the fourth year.

Each **CDP** award holder is expected to make a financial commitment to the students recruited, especially where the HEI and non-HEI partners are geographically distant, and student travel is required.

For Training grants that are CDAs or include CDAs, funding includes an extra CDA stipend payment. This helps CDA students cover costs from working at both the host Research Organisation (RO) and the non-HEI partner site.

HEIs must ensure that CDA students receive this additional amount. Please see the website for current rates.

2.1.2 London weighting

London weighting has been included in the calculation of the costs for the grant, where this applies.

CDA students affiliated with a London-based HEI receive a £2,000 yearly stipend uplift. CDP/CDA students who are affiliated with a non-HEI that is London based (but their HEI is outside London) will receive a £1,000 per year stipend uplift. This uplift will automatically be added to the stipend payments for the duration of the grant. HEIs must ensure that CDA students receive this additional amount.

2.1.3 Fees

This fund heading includes support for students' tuition fee payments for the duration of the grant.

The duration of the funding provided to Training grants is on the same basis as the stipend payments.

2.1.4 Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)

RTSG funding can be used to support:

- study visits
- conference attendance
- other training and development opportunities necessary for the student's primary research
- research costs which are necessary for the student's primary research (for example, consumables, artist materials, exhibition costs).

For further guidance on the eligible use of RTSG funding, see section 2.5 of this guide.

For DTP2 RTSG is calculated on the basis of the number of notional studentships the DTP has been awarded:

- For CDPs Round 1 and 2, RTSG is £200 per student per annum.
- For CDP Round 3, RTSG is £500 per student per annum.
- For CDP Round 4, RTSG is £750 per student per annum.

The Training grant award holder must ensure RTSG access considers each student's research needs.

2.1.5 Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)

Disabled students recruited to UKRI-funded studentships can apply for additional financial support for costs arising from postgraduate studies, due to their disability.

A funding stream will be added at the end of the academic year for claims within that year. In the final year, funds should be requested at reconciliation.

DSA claims can be made using the process described on the [UKRI website](#).

2.1.6 Other

The 'Other' fund heading includes the Cohort Development Fund (CDF) for studentships funded via DTP2. For guidance on the use of CDF, please refer to section 2.3.

For CDPs, there is coordination award which covers all CDP/CDA students and supports cohort activities.

2.2 Support for individual student development

Student development is built into awards from the start, while recognising that needs and opportunities will arise as the studentship progresses. Funding for development is included in the awards with the flexibility to cover both scenarios. There are scheme-specific mechanisms for providing additional support for student development, as follows:

CDP2 – CDAs funded under CDP2 receive three and a half years funding. This includes funding for a three-year full-time studentship and six months funding which can be used flexibly as a Student Development Fund (SDF). The SDF should be used to meet the individual needs of the student, in line with the terms and conditions of the grant.

CDP3 – CDAs funded under CDP3 receive four years funding. It is permissible to make an initial award to the student of less than four years, for example, three years and nine months, to allow for additional development costs to be covered. Any development opportunities should be embedded within the four-year period (pro rata for part-time). Development opportunities should be based on the student's individual needs, within AHRC's terms and conditions, and agreed between the student and their supervisor and co-supervisor.

CDP4 – CDAs funded under CDP4 receive four years funding. In this case, the student should be awarded the full four years at the start of the studentship. RTSG has increased and can be used to cover travel and subsistence for development activities as well as the other uses for RTSG listed above.

DTP2 – Engagement Provision – consortia are permitted to use up to a maximum of 5% of the value of stipend, tuition fees and RTSG (excluding CDF) to support additional costs for engagement and development activities. These additional costs may include travel and subsistence expenses for placements or engagement with external collaborators. They can also cover fees for training courses related to student development. The 5% limit is a maximum, and unused funds must support studentships.

The 5% flexibility should be managed like the Student Development Fund (SDF) for DTP1 and CDTs, pooled and allocated based on student needs.

Funding for individual student development must not be used to support infrastructure, reimburse university or partner staff costs, or fund activities normally supported by Research Organisations (ROs). For studentships which are not initially awarded as four years, development funding is provided to enable longer PhDs to be supported. This funding is available to extend PhD studentships flexibly and responsively. It supports appropriate training for individual AHRC-funded students based on their needs.

For students receiving four years of funding, Training grants must ensure a wide variety of development opportunities are integrated into their doctoral training.

The maximum funding duration permitted is four years FTE (or part-time equivalent). Doctoral projects must be designed and supervised to ensure students submit their thesis within the funded period, as defined at the project's outset.

All awards provide individual students with access to needs-based training, offering development opportunities that benefit their doctoral research. Consideration should be given to the studentship extension period to enable

these activities. Where four years funding is provided at the start, students should still have access to these opportunities but, they should be completed within the funded period. For example:

Placements – where a student is undertaking a placement which is an integral part of their studentship. It does not need to be linked to the research project but is a valuable contribution to the student's doctoral training programme.

International placements – where a student requires an extended period overseas, for example, to develop specific language skills to undertake their research project successfully. The need for language skills development should be agreed at the start of the award, meaning the student's initial offer will exceed three years of funding.

Skills development – where extended time is given for students acquiring additional skills, such as high-level methodological or demanding discipline-specific skills like palaeographical, papyrological, or epigraphical expertise. Where the development of new skills is required in order to undertake fieldwork, or new skills are developed by undertaking fieldwork. Where fieldwork is being undertaken principally for primary research, for example, access to an archive, this should be supported from the RTSG.

Funding may support students for a longer period if outlined in the original Training grant application and agreed with AHRC at the award's outset. Development funding can also cover costs of specific training courses relevant to a student's research or practice, without extending the studentship period. If funding is used for high-cost training, the grant holder may need financial approval from their RO to charge costs ahead of the grant profile.

Students receiving 'fees only' funding may benefit from development funding, as long as it is not a stipend award, such as covering a placement period.

Training grant award holders may grant students an extension of funding at any time during their award as a result of a development opportunity. This should be in accordance with processes outlined by the Training grant. It is important to ensure that any change to the funding end date is recorded in Je-S Student Details, alongside any changes to the submission due date, if applicable. A brief note should be added to state the reason for the change, for example, 'three-month internship opportunity.' ROs do not need to seek AHRC approval for this but should provide details in Je-S for auditing purposes, for example, Submission Rate Survey (see below).

2.3 Cohort Development Fund (CDF)

The purpose of the CDF (whether through a DTP2 or the CDP coordination grant) is to support innovative training and development activities for the wider cohort of students. Generally, these activities should be accessible to the entire cohort

funded by the AHRC. In some cases, more focussed subject-specific activities may be provided, but these should still be open to all eligible students.

CDF should be used where a collective need is identified or where there is an opportunity for collective and collaborative working that develops students' skills. The fund is not intended to support needs-based training for individual students. CDF funding may be used to cover the travel costs of AHRC-funded students travelling to cohort events. However, tickets cannot be purchased for travel which will take place after the end of the studentship award or the end of the grant. It is the Training grant holder's responsibility to ensure that the costs incurred in the course of attending CDF activities are reasonable.

AHRC has not listed eligible or non-eligible CDF uses, allowing consortia flexibility, but CDF cannot fund infrastructure, staff costs, or activities normally supported by ROs.

CDF-funded activities may be open to AHRC-funded students, such as CDA award holders in DTPs, or the broader arts and humanities student community within a consortium or RO. For example, spaces at a CDF-funded student-led conference could be available to consortium students who are not funded by AHRC.

If a consortium is able to extend CDF-supported events to non-AHRC-funded students, this would be welcomed by the AHRC. Provided that students supported through the Training grant have priority and the activity is addressing an identified need from the AHRC-funded cohort.

AHRC provides a coordination grant to a CDP award holder to support cohort activities like networking and training for all CDP awards and students. All CDP award holders must participate and contribute time, financial support, or in-kind contributions for cohort development activities. Examples include providing expertise or offering venues for events.

2.4 Consortium Contribution from DTP2 award holders

The consortium provides a mandatory financial contribution to fund DTPs' stipend, tuition fees, and RTSG. Its financial value is based on the notional number of studentships awarded, outlined in the DTP2 Outcome Letter and additional grant terms and conditions.

AHRC recognises that the consortium also supports DTP costs, including funding for the director, management, and administration of the partnership. We welcome reporting of this support alongside any additional funding secured for CDF activities.

2.5 Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)

The RTSG is included within all AHRC Training grants through which doctoral students are supported. All AHRC-funded students supported through these grants are eligible for this support. It is the responsibility of the Training grant award holder to determine how this funding is allocated, within the guidelines provided by the AHRC.

RTSG funding supports doctoral students' overseas and UK study visits, conference attendance, and primary research costs, such as consumables or artist materials.

The value of the annual RTSG paid as part of a Training grant is calculated on the basis of the notional number of AHRC-funded doctoral students on the grant.

For DTP2s, RTSG is calculated per student annually, but no limit applies to the funding an individual student can receive from the total RTSG allocation. The Training grant award holder should treat the total RTSG payment as a fund allocated fairly and transparently based on student needs and priorities. The Training grant holder must clearly describe the application process and assessment criteria, making the information accessible to candidates, students, supervisors, and administrative staff.

RTSG for DTP2 is not a yearly 'voucher' for each AHRC-funded student and should not be allocated to students or supervisors in that manner.

For CDAs, RTSG is available for the individual student on the award. The supervisors and administrative staff should work with, and support, the student in making best use of this funding.

The full range of activities which the RTSG will cover should be made clear by the Training grant award holder to all parties.

Some general considerations which should be taken into account are:

- Funding must be allocated only for activities which are essential to the satisfactory completion of the student's thesis
- The RO must ensure students obtain necessary visas and permissions for their research and properly address health, safety, and security considerations
- The RTSG can be used to provide a contribution towards the costs of travel, additional accommodation, and other associated costs that are incurred as a result of the student's trip
- It is the Award holder's responsibility to ensure that the costs incurred on the study visit or in attending the conference are reasonable
- The duration of a study visit should not normally exceed 12 months

- We would not normally expect a student to go on a UK or overseas study visit in the last three months of the funded period of their award
- RTSG must not be provided for students after the end of their period of funding
- Funded activities must not take place before the student's award has commenced (retrospective funding is not permitted)

Funds from the RTSG may be pooled across all Training grants and entitled schemes.

Award holders must maintain a robust accounting system for amounts spent on eligible AHRC-funded students and demonstrate a transparent, fair process for awarding RTSG funding. These records will be included in the Funding Assurance Programme (FAP), and the AHRC is entitled to request these records at any time. At final reconciliation, the Training grant award holder must declare total RTSG spending for the grant, but a student-by-student breakdown is not required.

RTSG must not fund broader professional training or development costs, nor support external partner costs, including CDA, CDP, placements, or internships. The exception is CDP4/CDAs where RTSG has been increased to enable students to access development opportunities. It should not be used for travel to the CDA partner organisation for the purposes of undertaking the research project (that is, it does not cover costs associated with the standard period required, as part of the CDA, to work in the CDP award holder organisation).

2.6 Use of Funds

AHRC Training grant awards are cash limited.

Consortia may use their funding flexibly, including matched funding, to support students for longer or shorter periods (within the UKRI terms and conditions). The student cannot be asked to self-fund any part of their study.

For competitive funding, the application process and decision criteria must be clearly communicated to all parties. The award holder must also have a clear complaints and appeals process in place to address any problems which might arise.

The Training grant award holder must ensure student activity costs are reasonable and funds are used responsibly.

Training grant award holders are responsible for monitoring spend. They are advised to keep AHRC informed of any projected underspend.

2.6.1 Virement

It is permissible to vire out of any of the fund headings except DSA and "Other". It is permissible to vire into any of these headings except for "Other" unless specifically for CDF activity.

For reconciliation, costs must be assigned correctly. Primary research costs, including study visits, should be charged to RTSG. Award holders should vire into RTSG rather than assign costs to an incorrect heading.

2.6.2 Can money be moved between Training grants?

It is not possible to move funding between grants as reconciliation will be against the funding provided on an individual grant.

You may fund an individual student from multiple Training grants. For example, if a student's end date is beyond the end date of the grant, and you have another grant which has funding available to cover the student's remaining period, you may draw the student's funding from this other grant. You will need to update the Je-S Student Details record to show that the student is now being funded from this second grant. If it is not possible to move a student onto another grant, or if there is no other grant available, please contact the AHRC.

RTSG, can be "pooled" across grants. This means that funding in this line of a grant can be used for any eligible AHRC student. You must ensure that records are kept as to how this funding has been allocated and report expenditure against the grant the funds were taken from.

2.7 Payments

2.7.1 Payments to ROs

All payments from AHRC are made to the RO which holds the Training grant award. The AHRC does not make payments directly to students.

Payments for each year from AHRC to the Training grant award holder will be profiled into four quarterly payments.

2.7.2 Payments to students

The Training grant award holder should make regular stipend payments to its students in accordance with the UKRI Terms and Conditions.

2.8 What other funding is available?

Opportunities for additional funding will be advertised on the UKRI website, including scope of each scheme, eligibility, and application deadlines.

3 Award Management

3.1 Managing Studentships

Annex B provides additional guidance on Training grant management and AHRC's expectations for engagement and partnership with award holders.

3.1.1 Changes and Adjustments

AHRC recognises that changes in circumstances are inevitable over the course of a long award and equally, wishes to encourage the development of new and innovative approaches to doctoral research training. Most of these changes can be agreed by the RO or consortium without AHRC's involvement, as long as AHRC is then informed about them through agreed reporting mechanisms.

Training grant award holders must contact AHRC to discuss significant departures from their original application regarding strategy, vision, student provision, or award governance. The director or lead contact should email the AHRC with details of the change, the impact it will have, and any action that is being taken in mitigation of risks.

DTP2 award holders need to contact AHRC immediately if the Director is stepping down. AHRC will need to approve the process for appointing a new Director and should be consulted before the DTP commits to the recruitment. AHRC does not need to approve the appointment as the recruitment panel is best placed to do this.

CDPs need to inform AHRC through Je-S maintenance of a change of award holder.

CDAs will need to seek approval from the AHRC for a change of award holder. You must provide AHRC with details of the proposed award holder and a brief rationale for the proposed change.

Wherever possible, AHRC should be informed in advance of the change, not retrospectively.

Award holders may make minor award adjustments without AHRC permission, provided they align with AHRC's strategic direction and this guide.

Where problems arise with the management of funds within the Terms and Conditions of the Training grant, the RO should discuss this with the AHRC.

It should be noted that the AHRC will only permit extension of Training grants under exceptional circumstances. Award holders need to approach AHRC well in advance as we cannot grant extensions retrospectively or once the Final Expenditure Statement has been issued.

3.1.2 Recruitment of students

All recruitment should be undertaken in line with the [UKRI good practice principles in recruitment and training at a doctoral level](#).

For DTP1 and CDT, the AHRC only supported Master's studentships that were designed to lead on to doctoral research. Beyond the 2018/19 Academic Year, AHRC no longer supports Master's studentships. However, it is permissible for award holders to build master's elements into doctoral provision, for example, to enable doctoral students to gain knowledge or skills necessary for their doctoral research.

On all advertisements, regardless of the forum, it must be clearly stated that it is AHRC studentships that are being offered.

We expect all award holders to offer the option of studying part-time, and to be open to applications from students who have already commenced doctoral study, subject to the Terms and Conditions in respect of the 50% funding minimum, as per [UKRI guidance](#).

Studentships should be advertised as fully funded regardless of whether the full amount is coming from the AHRC. Studentships should not be advertised as being part funded.

Consortia and ROs should not recruit students to specific, pre-determined research topics, with the exception of CDAs, see below. Our schemes need to foster and encourage innovation, and students must be able to approach an RO with whatever project they want to undertake. Training grant award holders will need to determine and be satisfied that the proposed project or course falls within AHRC's remit and the subject area specified within the award.

When advertising for students, it would be permissible to highlight particular research areas or research strategies. This may be in connection with research areas or teams where the student might benefit from working in a wider research environment.

CDP/CDA and DTP/CDA awards differ in that students are being recruited to pre-determined projects developed by the non-HEI and HEI supervisors. Students need to be made aware of the provisional project title, scope, and context in which they are taking on their research. Equally, they must be allowed to help shape their thesis and have input into how the project will operate.

Where a student declines a studentship offer, the award holder may wish to offer the award to a reserve candidate. This can be done but only where the individual is of sufficient calibre. Alternatively, the award holder may wish to leave the award unfilled in a given academic year and carry forward the funding to the next recruitment round. CDPs need to seek permission from AHRC before moving studentships between years. This is not an option for the final student cohort as Training grants will not be extended for this purpose.

As a general point, it is not permitted to pre-allocate awards (even notionally) or 'ring-fence' AHRC funding for any reason. For example, for particular ROs, specific subject areas or for inter-disciplinary awards. AHRC awards must be allocated on an open and competitive basis. There are two exceptions. First, UKRI allows Training grant award holders to make an exception to this principle for reasons of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. However, before utilising this exception the award holder must ensure that any proposed process meets all the relevant legal obligations for such action. Second, for CDA awards under DTP2, ring-fencing is permitted, and it is expected that this will happen in line with the approach specified in the application (or any subsequent agreement with AHRC). Within the ring-fence, there must be a quality threshold for the awards to ensure that CDAs are on a par with other students supported through the consortium. If there are insufficient high quality CDA applications to meet the ring-fence, this should be reported to AHRC. CDAs can be carried over to the following year (except in the final year).

3.1.3 Student Eligibility

Every student, their subject, course of study, and the RO where they are studying must meet the eligibility criteria set out in the [UKRI Terms and Conditions of Training grants and UKRI Training Grant Guidance](#). This is along with any scheme-specific guidance. Information on the AHRC's subject domain can be found in the AHRC's [Research Funding Guide](#).

Residential eligibility: The decision on eligibility as a 'home student' or as an 'international student' must be taken by the award holder in discussion with the RO(s) in the consortium. This is in accordance with [UKRI training grant terms and conditions and guidance](#). Please do not contact the AHRC for advice or a decision on particular cases, as our staff are unable to provide advice regarding residential eligibility or other international student matters.

International students: for DTP2, international students can be recruited, in line with UKRI guidance (<https://www.ukri.org/publications/eu-and-international-eligibility-for-ukri-studentships-from-2021/>). Up to 30% of any one cohort can be international students. For CDPs, which are recruiting single students to CDAs, there is no restriction. AHRC will monitor across the CDPs and may amend the approach if overall recruitment is above 30%.

Academic eligibility: Those applying for a doctoral studentship should have sufficient experience to enable them to undertake doctoral study.

If they are studying for a master's degree or similar postgraduate qualification, they should have met all the course requirements prior to the start date of their AHRC doctoral studentship.

If a student does not have experience of formal postgraduate study, they may be eligible for a studentship if they can demonstrate evidence of sustained experience beyond their undergraduate degree level that is specifically relevant to their proposed research topic and could be considered equivalent to master's

study. This should include evidence as to how the training and development the student has received is equivalent to that obtained through a master's course and, therefore, prepares them to continue to doctoral study.

Award holders might also consider how they encourage and support potential applicants who have extensive experience outside the HEI sector, equivalent to academic qualifications. This is particularly important for CDAs where there is a requirement to work across sectors.

3.1.4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Award holders are required to put in place a recruitment strategy that demonstrates a commitment to processes that reflect and embed EDI principles. This includes transparent decision-making structures and an appropriate and open advertising strategy. This should be in line with [UKRI's EDI policy](#) and the [UKRI good practice principles in recruitment and training at a doctoral level](#) and, if applicable, as outlined in the EDI action plan submitted with their applications or developed subsequently.

CDP4 award holders are required to put in place monitoring arrangements for the implementation of their EDI action plans. They must report on the activities that have been undertaken and the extent to which they have achieved the proposed aims.

3.1.5 Duration of study supported

Training grant award holders must carefully consider the duration of the funding award that is being offered to the student. AHRC funding allows for a full-time award of longer than three and up to a maximum of four years. Unless four years is a requirement of the award, it is likely that duration will be determined after the studentship has commenced. If the initial offer is less than four years, we would suggest that it is made clear to the student and their supervisor that there is a possibility of an extension to the studentship.

Students who have already commenced doctoral study are eligible to apply for AHRC funding, provided that, at the start of the AHRC award, they will have at least 50% of their period of study remaining. The award would be made for the remainder of their period of study. This mirrors the co-funding requirement that at least 50% of the costs of a studentship comes from an AHRC training grant (for DTP2 this would be from the combined funds of the AHRC funding and Consortium Contribution). In determining the length of a studentship to be offered, the period may be reduced to take account of any time a student has already spent on doctoral study. Funding should only be offered for the period required to complete their studies.

We expect students to receive full support from their RO to enable them to achieve the submission date that was agreed at the start of their award. This is notwithstanding other opportunities which may arise as noted above. Please see 3.2 for further information on submission due dates.

3.1.6 Changing between full-time and part-time study

Please see the [UKRI Training Grant Terms and Conditions and guidance](#) for information on approving requests to change between full-time and part-time study.

Where approval has been granted, ROs should calculate the remaining length of the studentship on the basis of funding already received.

Where a student has changed from part-time to full-time status, or vice versa, the student's funding end date and submission due date will need to be amended accordingly. The student must be informed and ROs will need to input this information into Je-S.

Where an overpayment occurs as a result of a change of the mode of study, ROs are expected to take reasonable steps to recover this overpayment.

Award holders are asked to contact AHRC if a CDP/CDA student will be undertaking part-time study so that the training grant can be amended accordingly. This will avoid the grant ending before the studentship ends.

3.1.7 What happens if a student withdraws?

It may be possible to recruit a replacement student, depending on individual circumstances. Please contact AHRC for further advice.

3.1.8 Suspensions

When a studentship is suspended, the funding end date and the submission date move forward by the duration of the suspension.

If the suspension takes the student beyond the end date of the Training grant, the RO should add the student onto a later AHRC doctoral Training grant to cover the remaining period of the studentship. DTPs should be open to supporting CDP/CDA students through this mechanism for any ROs within their consortium, provided the student's remaining term can be accommodated within the time period of the award. Funds remaining on a Training grant will not follow that student to the new grant.

For **CDP/CDAs**, if no other grant is available, a no-cost extension to the grant can be requested through Je-S grant maintenance. This would be an exception, as extensions are not typically allowed for Training grants.

For **DTP2**, AHRC will be engaging with award holders to determine how students whose term goes beyond the Training grant end date will be supported. In the meantime, suspensions and changes to part-time status should be granted, as normal, so as not to disadvantage these students.

The flexible use of funding in the Training grant should allow grant award holders to make the best use of the funding available, for example, to part-fund another student. If a Training grant award holder is unsure how to deploy unused funds, please contact AHRC to discuss options. Any funds left over will be reconciled once the grant has finished.

If a student is unable to resume their studies after a period of suspension, when the grant is reconciled, the RO will be expected to repay any funds that have been overpaid to the student.

Changing student details such as their funding end date on the system does not change the Training grant end date, as the two are independent. If the revised studentship end date will go beyond the grant end date, the RO must contact AHRC.

3.1.9 Internships and placements

Please refer to the UKRI Terms and Conditions and guidance.

3.2 Submission Due Dates

On accepting a studentship to pursue a programme of doctoral research, a student also commits to make every effort to complete their project, and to submit their doctoral thesis, by the end of the period of funding.

Doctoral projects must be designed and supervised in such a way that students are able to submit their thesis within the funded period, as defined at the outset of the project.

This section should be read in conjunction with Annex C.

3.2.1 Setting of submission due dates

For CDP/CDA students: Full-time students are expected to submit no later than four years after the start of the award. For any students starting from October 2024 the submission due date **must** be set no later than four years from the start which should match the student's funding end date (see DTP2 guidance below). Part-time students are expected to submit no later than four years FTE after the start of the award. This is assuming that the award is not suspended at any point (see sections below).

For DTP2 students: AHRC's aim is for its funding to enable students to submit by the end of the funded period. The expectation is that ROs will put in place processes to enable students to achieve this aim. There should be no assumption of an unfunded period when the doctoral programme is designed, and the submission due date is set. Students can receive up to four years' funding and the submission due date for full-time students must be set at no more than four years after the start of the award (or FTE for part-time students).

For students who have already commenced their doctoral study prior to the AHRC award, the submission due date would still be set at one year from the end of the AHRC award for full-time students (or part-time equivalent). In line with the above, it would be set at the end date of the funding for **DTP2 and CDP4** students.

Where a student has changed from full-time to part-time status, the student's submission due date should be set to two years after the end of the studentship. If the change is from part-time to full-time, the submission due date should be set to one year after the end of the studentship. ROs will need to input this information into Je-S. As above, for **DTP2 and CDP4**, the submission due date would be amended to match the updated end date of funding.

By the end of the funded period of the studentship, students are expected to have completed their thesis. Any period after the end of a funded period of the studentship and before the submission due date provides an opportunity to meet any unforeseen circumstances that have arisen during the course of the studentship. This period is not funded by the AHRC.

On accepting a Training grant award which includes doctoral studentships, the consortia or RO also accepts a commitment to support each student throughout the duration of their studies. This will ensure that a high-quality thesis can be submitted on time. It is not appropriate for the RO to require a student to submit a thesis that is below the necessary standard to enable the RO to maintain its submission rates.

3.2.2 Changes to submission due dates

The submission due date should not be updated unless there is a change in the student's circumstances for which a change in submission due date is permissible. It is the RO's responsibility to inform students of any changes to their submission due date resulting from suspensions or submission due date extensions.

Periods of suspension should be considered when both the end date of a student's AHRC funding, and the date by which the student should submit their doctoral thesis, are calculated, with the date extended by the length of the suspension.

If an extension to the funded period has been made to offset a period of absence, the submission due date should also be extended by the same period.

If an extension to the funding period is granted for reasons such as placements or training, when the student is continuing to receive AHRC funding (that is, there is no suspension), then the submission due date should not be changed. The only exception is if, at the time of the extension, the submission due date is the same as the end date of the funding period. In this case, the submission due date will need to be moved to ensure the due date is not before the funding end date.

AHRC does not need to approve extensions to submission due dates. The RO is responsible for considering the request in accordance with [UKRI training grant terms and conditions and guidance](#) and this guide.

Requests must be made to the RO formally and in advance of the submission due date. The RO should only consider requests to extend the submission due

date by up to one year. Extensions cannot be approved or recorded retrospectively therefore it is important that such cases are brought to the RO's attention in advance of the student's expected AHRC submission due date.

If the extension is eligible and agreed by the RO, the RO should amend the submission due date on Je-S Student Details, and add an appropriate reason, as outlined below. Je-S must be updated to ensure the student is included in the correct survey period.

Periods of paternity leave of up to 2 weeks granted during the period of the studentship or the writing up period will not be taken into consideration when submission due dates are calculated. However, requests to extend submission due dates because of a period of paternity leave can be considered during the writing up period. Such requests should be submitted to the RO in advance of the expected submission due date and recorded by the RO in Je-S Student Details if approved.

Periods under the unpaid parental leave scheme of up to fifty weeks granted during the period of the studentship should be dealt with as an interruption to studies and recorded in Je-S Student Details in the normal way and the submission due date updated.

Periods of illness without a medical certificate – an extension to the submission due date will not be approved for periods of illness without appropriate medical certificates, unless the period of sick leave falls under the terms and conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic (Appendix A of the UKRI Terms and Conditions of Training Grant) or the updated UKRI Terms and Conditions effective from the 2025/26 academic year: [UKRI is increasing PhD stipends and improving student support – UKRI](#).

If the reason for the extension is not in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the award, or insufficient detail regarding the reason for this change has been recorded on Je-S Student Details, the AHRC reserves the right to contact the RO to query the change in submission due date, and to revert to the original submission due date if the extension is not permissible within our Terms and Conditions.

When the RO alters a submission due date on Je-S, they will have to add a reason for the change, which will be monitored as part of the submission rate survey. The RO should ensure there is sufficient detail recorded on Je-S, with reference to the Terms and Conditions of the award, regarding the reason for the change to enable AHRC to be assured of the decision and the rationale behind it. The RO should not include information of a personal or sensitive nature.

3.2.3 Changes to the submission due date after the end of funding period

While the AHRC will normally accept a submission due date extended by the RO to take account of any period of suspension during a studentship, only in exceptional circumstances will we accept the RO extending the submission due date on account of difficulties that arise after the end of the student's funded period.

These exceptional circumstances might be:

- Illness or accident – this refers to any period after the end of the funded period where the student was unable to work on their thesis for medical reasons.
- Exceptional personal circumstances – this includes bereavement and any other difficult personal circumstance that has rendered the student unable to work on their thesis after the end of the funded period.
- Scholarships – when a scholarship is awarded after a studentship has finished and before submission, the scholarship must provide additional value to the original thesis or offer the student a rare opportunity to research a related topic. Extensions should not be granted if a scholarship is awarded to fund an additional year of research on the student's current thesis topic.
- Maternity, adoption, or shared parental leave – a maximum of twelve months is permitted for each individual period of maternity, adoption, or shared parental leave after the end of the funded period.

Any requests for extensions to submission due dates relating to periods of paternity or shared parental leave that occur after the end of the funded period, regardless of duration, should be submitted to the RO in advance of the expected submission due date, and recorded by the RO in Je-S Student Details, if approved.

If the student makes a request, after the end of the funded period, for an extension to their submission due date based on a certified period of illness experienced during the tenure of their studentship, the RO may extend the submission due date. The date may be extended only by the period specifically covered by medical certificate(s) or agreed as an exception during the COVID-19 pandemic (Appendix A of the UKRI Terms and Conditions of Training Grant), only if the RO was notified of the period of certified illness at the time it occurred, and only if the student's funded period and submission due date had not already been extended because of the absence.

The following are **not** considered grounds for an extension to the submission due date:

- Taking up full-time employment after the award has ended – the RO should not grant an extension to the submission deadline if the submission has been delayed because the student has taken up full-time employment after an award has ended, that is, after the end of the funded period.
- Taking up employment at the end of a studentship is considered a normal outcome of doctoral study and is therefore not a reason for extending a submission due date.
- Transfers from full-time to part-time study after the funded period of the studentship has ended – the RO should not approve extensions to submission due dates because the student has changed their mode of registration after their studentship has ended, that is, after the end of the funded period.
- Requests submitted after a student's submission due date has passed – the RO cannot grant extension requests retrospectively. If a student does not submit their thesis or a legitimate extension request on or before their submission due date, they will count as a nil submitter.

If, having read the guidance above, you are still unsure whether a student who has passed the end of their funded period has a valid reason to extend their submission due date, please contact the AHRC via email at skills@ahrc.ukri.org.

3.2.4 Transfer of Student from one RO to another

AHRC-funded **DTP2** students may only transfer to another AHRC-funded DTP, that is, to another RO that is a member of a current DTP.

CDA students will not be permitted to transfer their studies on the project to another RO. There may be exceptions to this where the academic supervisor moves to another RO. If this is the case the AHRC will consider transferring the award and the studentship(s) to the new RO, but only where it is considered imperative to the continuation of the project. In such cases all parties involved must agree and a student would not be under any obligation to transfer (see Section TGC 7 of the UKRI Training Grant Guidance).

3.2.5 Ethical Issues

Students and supervisors should give careful consideration as to whether there are ethical issues raised by any aspect of the proposed project. We expect such projects to be approved by the university's ethical committee or equivalent body. This would also be the case for any issue which arises as the project evolves. For any project with potential ethical concerns, the student should be given appropriate training before embarking on the project, or as soon as the concerns arise. Students should then be provided with the necessary advice and support as the project progresses.

We recommend that award holders or lead administrators put in place a process to capture this information, if they do not do so already, so that the Je-S Student Details can be updated to confirm that ethical issues have been considered.

3.2.6 Project Partners

Reporting mechanisms used by AHRC require Training grant award holders to inform us about project partners beyond academia involved in the delivery of their awards, so we can strengthen our evidence base.

Je-S Student Details allows for partner details to be recorded for any project which includes collaboration with a non-HEI organisation, including co-funding. These fields must be completed for CDAs, and partner information should be included on both the CDA record and the student's record.

Non-HEI collaboration should be recorded on all awards for which it is a part, even if the collaboration is informal or short-term and the contribution is in-kind. It would be helpful if any internships or placements are recorded through these fields. Project partner details should be completed for all non-HEI organisations involved in the student's award. Any financial or in-kind contributions provided should be the total for the project and not annual contributions. The RO will need to provide a contact at the non-HEI organisation. They should only be recorded as a supervisor if they are formally undertaking a supervisor role, which will be the case for CDAs. If they are only supervising work undertaken during a placement, then we would not expect them to be recorded as a supervisor.

3.3 Management of funding

3.3.1 Costs incurred before the commencement of the grant

It is permissible for the award holding RO to incur limited expenditure before the start date of a grant, which is subsequently charged to the grant, but only where this relates to the development of Cohort Development Fund (CDF) related activities and where these have been specified in the application proposal. For example, this might cover the set up and development costs for an online learning environment, where this has been specified in the proposal as an element of the RO's or consortium's plans for the CDF.

3.3.2 Ineligible costs

AHRC Training grant awards do not cover administrative costs of setting up and running the awards, such as the recruitment and salary of the lead, director, manager, project specialist, or any similar role.

3.3.3 The relationship between AHRC-funded consortia

AHRC is supportive of award holders opening aspects of their training programmes to current AHRC-funded students from other Training grant awards when there is capacity to do so. Award holders should also consider where they might work jointly with other award holders to develop and deliver opportunities collaboratively.

We encourage award holders to develop funding models which allow activities to be more open to students from other awards, with the potential to develop wider peer networks of students across awards.

Engagement Provision funding is specific to the award and should continue to be used solely for the benefit of AHRC students recruited to the given Training grant award.

3.3.4 Extensions for AHRC-funded students beyond the end date of the Training grant

Where an AHRC-funded student is granted an extension to their studentship (for example, for maternity leave, suspension of studies, etc), and this causes the studentship to extend beyond the end of the Training grant that they are currently being funded from, they should be funded, if necessary, from another AHRC Training grant. The AHRC expects directors of Training grants to make appropriate provision within the grants for this possibility, in discussion with other members of the consortia.

In a situation where a CDA student's award needs to be extended, it is possible for the student's funding to be continued from any of the current AHRC Training grant awards on which the institution is a partner.

3.3.5 Funding Flexibility – DTP2

Training grant award holders are encouraged to make full use of the flexibility permitted by the terms and conditions of the Training grant to create and maintain high-quality research training environments and recruit the strongest students.

The Cohort Development Fund (CDF) must be ring-fenced for cohort development activities and not used, for example, to create additional studentships. Further information on the types of expenditure that are appropriate under other fund headings is given elsewhere in this guide.

The funding is calculated based on four years' funding for each student. This allows the students to undertake development opportunities which might extend the award as well as enabling them to submit their thesis within the funding period.

Where individual students do not need the full four years' funding, the flexibility should be used to support extensions, for example for maternity leave.

The terms and conditions attached to each Training grant offer letter specify requirements relating to the joint funding of a studentship, for example, jointly between the AHRC grant and institutional funding.

3.3.6 Institutional Commitment and Matched Funding/Co-Funding

We expect all ROs to honour the financial or in-kind commitments made in the original proposal document, this applies to lead and partner ROs, and to any commitments made by partner organisations.

If, for any reason, there are changes to what an RO or partner can provide, the AHRC should be contacted immediately to discuss the situation. The AHRC will need to treat very seriously any suggestion that an organisation may have made

unrealistic commitments as part of a Training grant application. The AHRC will address the issue with the senior management of the RO concerned.

Where a studentship is co-funded in accordance with the flexibility permitted by the terms and conditions of the Training grant, for example, 50:50 funded with institutional funding, and therefore is badged as an 'AHRC Studentship', the studentship must have been awarded through open competition. This means that institutional funding (or funding from other sources) can only be used alongside AHRC funding to co-fund a studentship where that student has been prioritised for funding against others in the rank ordered list.

All students who are 50% or more AHRC-funded need to be recorded on Je-S Student Details so that AHRC has a full picture of the students that are being supported with AHRC funding.

Institutional funding provided by an RO as part of separate competition cannot be deemed part of the funding commitment made to AHRC by an institution; funding must be deployed within the award process for AHRC studentships for it to count.

In accepting the **DTP2 award**, the Consortium has made a financial commitment to co-fund the DTP through the Consortium Contribution.

The mandatory Consortium Contribution for DTP2 awards means that all PhD students appointed are notionally co-funded by the AHRC and the Consortium. To ensure that all students remain at least 50% funded by the AHRC, the total Consortium Contribution (Stipend, Tuition Fees and RTSG) must not exceed the value of the AHRC's total contribution to those three fund headings.

In addition to the mandatory commitment, the consortium has outlined in the application how it will support the DTP through the provision of management and training infrastructure. This will include the time commitment from Directors and DTP2 Managers and administrative support. We expect the consortia to honour the financial or in-kind commitments made in the original proposal document.

3.3.7 AHRC Visibility

It is vital for AHRC to be able to demonstrate and promote the economic, cultural, social, and artistic value of publicly funded research and training. Our doctoral training funding is a part of this public investment, and we expect award holders to publicise the AHRC's investment, and to ensure that students know that their funding is from the AHRC.

We are also keen to hear about any interesting projects or activities undertaken at the Training grant level, by individual AHRC-funded students or student cohorts. Of particular interest are those that demonstrate the depth and breadth of the high-quality training and development opportunities funded through our awards.

The AHRC logo must be included in any recruitment material, publications, publicity, or marketing material relating to the Training grant. This includes

printed material, event signage or electronic communications such as a website or blogs. In the case of media coverage online, in newspapers, magazines, radio or on television, acknowledgement should also be given where possible.

Information on how to use the AHRC brand and logo can be found at: [Media and communications team contacts – UKRI](#).

4 Monitoring

Students and ROs must complete and return any reports relating to the awards, as required by AHRC.

4.1 Monitoring and progress reporting

The AHRC expects a Training grant award to deliver on the plans set out in its proposal, and to have mechanisms in place to review its own progress against the specified vision, aims and objectives. Directors should contact the AHRC as soon as possible if a significant change to the plans set out in the proposal is envisaged.

4.1.1 Annual Report

As part of the monitoring process, the grant holder must submit an annual report to the AHRC. This applies to DTPs and CDPs but does not apply to CDAs.

This annual report will supplement the information on individual students and their projects that must be reported through Je-S Student Details, Researchfish and the submission rate survey which will continue as annual exercises.

The content of the annual report is defined in a separate template and guidance document and emailed to Training grant award holders.

4.1.2 Financial reporting

All Training grants will need to complete a Final Expenditure Statement (FES) and submit it on the system.

In addition, DTP2 awards will be asked to complete an annual, high-level financial expenditure report outlining both expenditure of AHRC funding and the Consortium Commitment.

The AHRC reserves the right to request Interim Expenditure Statements (IES) at any point during the lifetime of the Training grant.

4.2 Alumni and first employment destinations

It is essential that AHRC understands the careers that AHRC-funded students go on to and the contribution that they make to the UK's culture, society and economy. As part of our partnership working with the Training grant holders, we aim to capture this information and engage with alumni in the short, medium and long-term.

Information requirements are covered in the UKRI Guidance. There may also be other surveys undertaken by AHRC and UKRI, such as our alumni survey, or undertaken on their behalf, as well as national surveys, to which we expect ROs and RC-funded, and previously funded, students to contribute.

Annex A: Collaborative Working, Academic and Non-Higher Education

This section applies to both academic and non-Higher Education Institution (non-HEI) partnership/collaborative working.

Developing and Demonstrating a Collaboration

The first step in setting up a collaboration, whether academic or non-HEI, is to establish who may be a suitable partner for the project. Non-HEIs may wish to contact a Higher Education Institution's Research, Development or External Liaison Office to discuss how their activities may benefit a project. Alternatively, HEIs may seek to find a non-HEI organisation which could utilise a particular area of research or knowledge. HEI departments should also contact the appropriate office/person in their organisation for guidance and support. This office/person may be particularly useful in setting up agreements or contracts.

Colleagues who are already running successful collaborations may also be a good source of help and information in setting up a partnership. We encourage new collaborators to seek them out and utilise their expertise.

Initiating or joining a network of partnership projects can be useful in developing new partnerships as well as providing a forum for discussing ideas, problems, and good practice. For example, feedback has also shown that AHRC CDA students find real value in networking opportunities amongst themselves.

Collaborative working can be extremely rewarding and exciting, but it is not an easy option as it takes effort, hard work and commitment to make it work and to manage it successfully. Partners should not underestimate this in setting up a project and should not enter such a partnership if there is any doubt that they will be able to make that commitment.

Non-HEIs may wish to approach a collaboration with the view that involvement in collaborative projects provides good opportunities not just for students, but for their own staff development and skills training. In all cases, the AHRC encourages both academic and non-HEI partners to make good use of the opportunities afforded by collaborating to share their skills and knowledge and learn about each other's organisations and ways of working.

Those considering establishing a collaborative arrangement must be able to demonstrate that a strong relationship exists between the partner organisations, and that it is established as an equal partnership. Whilst the student and their PhD are central to the award and the PhD must meet the requirements and regulations of the HEI concerned, one of the main aims of collaboration is to establish and maintain links between academia and external partners that have some real, tangible, and long-lasting benefits.

The main indicators of a strong collaboration are listed below and should be considered in the formation of a collaboration, development of a Training grant application and throughout the delivery of the Training grant. These are based on the development of a joint PhD project, but the principles apply equally to shorter term collaborations which might, for example, form a placement opportunity for students:

- Do we agree what the project is about, will it make a good doctoral project and what are the wider benefits?
- Does the project meet the needs of both collaborating partners?
- What are our success measures and what is the 'bottom line' in terms of expectations?
- Is it feasible within the period of an AHRC studentship?
- Do we have a common understanding of language – do we agree what the terms 'supervisor' and 'training' mean, for example?
- Do partners have the necessary time and resources to commit?

In addition to this, are we clear on:

- the arrangements for joint supervision of the project/student
- the arrangements for sorting out confidentiality or ethical issues and intellectual property rights
- the means for identifying an appropriate student
- provision for training, monitoring and review of the student/project
- provision of and access to the required resources, collections and other
- financial commitments, contributions and procedures
- expected outcomes, timing and availability of research results
- Do we have a mechanism for establishing a formal agreement setting out expectations and responsibilities for the above?
- Is it an equal partnership with mutual benefits for all involved parties?

Academic supervisors should expect that the supervision of research students who are working on a collaborative project will involve an increased workload in comparison to the supervision of a standard doctoral student. In relation to the length of the commitment, partners within a CDA must be prepared to commit to the project for the full length of the award, at least up to the submission of the research student's thesis. Outside the CDA model, we encourage short and long-term partnerships and not all of them must start when the Training grant is set up, as long as they are all equitable and add value to the Training grant.

Non-academic partners should not be discouraged from entering a collaboration because they consider they do not have the capability or capacity to offer academic supervision to a PhD student. The responsibility for academic supervision lies with the academic supervisor. While some organisations or individuals may be able to offer some academic support, the non-academic supervisor role offers something different. It provides specific training and access to resources, people, collections, processes, knowledge and expertise that are vital to the success of the research project, and which would not be

possible without the collaboration. It is imperative that the non-academic supervisor has the full support of their organisation and can co-direct the project. They need to ensure that not only are the organisation's objectives being met, but that the student's research is fully supported and kept on track.

Other Sources of Information

[The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement](#) includes further useful information and suggestions for building and maintaining collaborations.

Collaborative working – academic

Where two or more ROs are working in a consortium, the AHRC award is made to all ROs identified in the proposal, although we expect the award to be administered and coordinated by the lead organisation and expect the lead applicant (Director) and named award holder to be based at the lead organisation.

A consortium award is made on the assumption that the lead organisation of the consortium will take the overall responsibility for the leadership and management of the award. The AHRC will direct all correspondence relating to the award to the lead organisation and expects this organisation to keep the AHRC informed of progress and any change in circumstance relating to the award.

In accepting the award, the lead organisation is confirming the acceptance of the terms and conditions of the award by all organisations within the consortium.

We recommend that, before commencing an AHRC award, the ROs involved in the consortium have in place a signed collaboration agreement. This should describe how the collaboration will operate and set out expectations and responsibilities for each organisation. This should cover areas such as:

- specific objectives, obligations, and responsibilities of each organisation
- provision of resources
- how awards are allocated between research organisations
- how decisions will be made
- how any disputes will be resolved
- issues of ethics or confidentiality
- ownership of research results and intellectual property
- outcome of studentships
- supervision and training
- monitoring and review
- financial contributions

The AHRC reserves the right to request a signed copy of any such agreement for its records.

The AHRC will not intervene in any disputes between the collaborating organisations but reserves the right to withdraw or terminate the award if the agreement is broken or terminated by one of the parties or if disputes cannot be resolved satisfactorily.

The AHRC accepts no responsibility for any financial arrangements made between the consortium organisations.

Collaborative working – non-academic

Collaborative working on a Training grant award with a non-HEI partner can take place in several ways, including internships and placements for individual students, cohort training and development, as well as through the CDP/CDA or DTP/CDA co-supervised doctoral research projects. It is expected that all collaborative working opportunities are managed and adhere to certain principles.

The RO and collaborating organisations are expected to have an agreement in place before the project begins.

The agreement should recognise the student's contribution and ensure that the IP arising from the research and/or training can be managed effectively. It is recommended that the student receives an induction programme in the non-HEI organisation similar to that provided for new employees. This will however vary depending on the nature of the project and the size of the organisation. Induction should be tailored to the needs of the student and the project and, if necessary, should also be offered to the academic supervisor where it might serve the needs of furthering trust, understanding and effective working relationships.

Where the non-HEI collaborating partner has agreed to make additional payments to the student, arrangements should be made between the partners and the student as to the amount, frequency and mechanism for payment. The AHRC will assume no responsibility or involvement in such payments, nor will it act as intermediary in any disputes over such payments.

Partners and students should note that costs incurred whilst working at or visiting the premises of the non-HEI collaborating organisation are not eligible for support from the Research Training Support Grant (RTSG).

The AHRC recognises that despite good planning and project management, working in a collaborative environment could in some cases leave students subject to external changes or forces that are out of their control. For this reason, it is important that the RO is informed at the time of any impediment to

progress and where this may have a significant impact on a student's ability to submit their thesis within the required timeframe.

Collaborative Doctoral Awards

CDAs (whether through CDPs or DTPs) are doctoral studentship projects which are co-developed between a university-based academic and an organisation outside higher education. They are intended as a way of facilitating collaboration with a diverse range of non-HEI partners. This can include smaller, regional partners. They can also spread capacity for non-HEIs to work with HEIs in focused, mutually beneficial ways. CDAs provide important opportunities for doctoral students to gain first-hand experience of work beyond the university environment. This can enhance the employment-related skills and training which a student may gain during their award.

CDA projects also encourage and establish links that can have long-term benefits for both collaborating partners, providing access to resources and materials, knowledge and expertise that may not otherwise have been available. This can also provide social, cultural and economic benefits to wider society.

To be classified as a Collaborative Doctoral Award, a studentship must meet the specific CDA criteria outlined below.

CDA criteria

The project needs to have been jointly developed by the academic and non-HEI partner. It is not sufficient for the student simply to be accessing resources or archives held by the non-HEI partner; both partners should be equally invested in the project, and the student will have a supervisor at both organisations. This does not preclude a prospective student being engaged in the development of the project, and they could be named on the application. It would be possible to badge a studentship as a CDA once it has commenced, if the non-HEI partner comes on board later, is fully engaged and has agreed to jointly supervise the student.

The project proposal would need to meet the following expectations:

- The research is relevant to both organisations' priorities and objectives
- The project is based on a truly collaborative approach
- Evidence of a clear commitment from the non-HEI to provide access to training, facilities and expertise not available in an academic setting alone
- The opportunity provided by the project to enable the student to develop a range of valuable skills and significantly enhance their future employability

There must be an opportunity for the student to spend time working at the non-HEI organisation's premises. During this time, the student must be engaged in activities which are an integral component of the research to be presented in the

thesis, as well as wider development activities and opportunities. For a full-time student, the minimum is three months, and the maximum is half the period of the studentship for example, twenty four months for a four-year award. When and how this time is spent will vary according to the nature of the project and is subject to negotiation between the partners and the student.

The partner organisation can be from the private, public, or voluntary sector (where a private company is defined as being at least 50% privately owned with a wealth creation base in the UK). The word 'organisation' is used as a generic term and should be interpreted as widely as possible. The AHRC wishes to encourage collaborations from any area within its subject remit and with a full range of organisations, bodies, and businesses. This includes the creative, cultural and heritage industries, both large and small, and sole traders and partnerships.

In most cases the non-HEI partner must have an operating base in the UK.

In exceptional cases, a collaboration with a company or organisation based outside the UK can be considered. AHRC recognises that, given the distinctive nature of its subject domain, there may be potential for reciprocal research collaborations outside the UK. A Training grant will need to be clear what additional benefits are to be gained from the collaboration, that demonstrable value from the project will be accrued to the UK, and that the collaboration will deliver long-term, lasting benefits. The overseas partner must specify a minimum contribution and would be expected to cover additional costs of travel to and from the UK. The logistics of running such a partnership should be carefully considered to demonstrate that the project is both viable and feasible.

For DTPs and CDPs rounds 1, 2 and 3, University museums and galleries or organisations that are deemed to be a spin-off or are supported by an HEI are eligible as project partners. This is providing that the project is not a collaboration with the parent institution.

For CDP4, where partners are part of a museum, gallery or other part of an HEI-managed organisation, up to 50% of the doctoral projects that are subsequently selected for nomination to the AHRC would be permitted in collaboration with the parent HEI.

We are keen to see a wide variety of partners engaged with collaborative studentships, including local partner organisations.

Organisations which are award holders or consortia members under the Collaborative Doctoral Partnership scheme can be partners on studentships funded through other AHRC-funded Training grants.

Experience has demonstrated that the signing of written agreements as part of these projects can be extremely valuable. Agreements ensure that all parties, including the student, are aware of, and understand, the requirements and responsibilities underlying the partnership. Training grant award holders or HEIs

within them may wish to develop a template agreement for setting out the expectations and responsibilities of CDA partnerships.

Specific Guidance for Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) and Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDPs)

The recruitment and selection of students to CDAs (both CDP and DTP) should involve both the academic and non-HEI partners to ensure both agree that the best student is selected. This will engender a shared ownership of all decisions relating to that studentship. Selecting, retaining and supporting the right student is key to the success of the project. Therefore, the collaborators must be fully involved and supportive of both project and student.

During the studentship, a collaborative doctoral student will spend time working in the non-HEI organisation's premises. During this time, the student must be engaged in activities which are an integral component of the research to be presented in the thesis. It is recommended that the scope and time of these activities is specified in the formal agreement.

It is recognised that some CDA projects will have originated with a particular student. Where that student has the appropriate ability, and provided they meet the eligibility criteria, it would be unfair and inappropriate for the studentship to be advertised. There may also be instances where a very particular knowledge or skill set is required. This means that a project is developed with a student in mind or that the field of potential well-qualified students is extremely limited. In such cases, recruitment of the student without competition may be justified, as long as the proposed project has been identified through a competitive process and the student has demonstrated that they have the requisite skills to be able to complete the doctorate. However, it is considered advisable that the majority of collaborative studentships should be advertised.

The AHRC will allow some flexibility in filling CDP/CDA studentships in the following situations:

a) if a nominated student subsequently withdraws after commencing their studies

An RO may be able to re-recruit in full to the studentship place within the first year of the project. Studentships should be re-advertised in the same way, but it may be possible to offer it to a suitable candidate who had previously applied through open selection. Awards are cash-limited: AHRC will be unable to supplement the award to cover the cost of a new student, and any additional funding needed will need to be found from other sources. Please contact the AHRC for further advice.

b) if a CDP is not able to fill a studentship or a student needs to delay their start

A CDP studentship start date can be delayed for a maximum period of twelve months. This is not permitted in the final year of the scheme. If

permission to delay the start date is granted by AHRC, the HEI partner will need to update information on Je-S immediately.

c) where a CDP partner organisation is unable to nominate sufficient projects to fill their studentship allocation for a cohort in a given year

In such circumstances the AHRC may consider allowing studentships to be carried over to the following year. The request should be submitted to the AHRC for consideration before the nomination deadline. No carry over is permitted in the final year of the allocation. Where a partner organisation is unable to meet their studentship allocation in more than one cohort, the AHRC may look to revise the allocation. A CDP is not allowed to transfer a studentship allocation that has not been filled to another CDP.

Collaborating partners are required to have mechanisms in place to ensure the continuation of the project. However, if for any reason the collaborative arrangement were to cease before the end of an AHRC studentship, it may be possible for any student concerned to continue as a standard doctoral studentship provided that:

- their research is still viable
- adequate supervision is available
- they will be able to complete their thesis within the required time.

Guidance regarding nominating CDP doctoral research projects

Nominated projects should demonstrate collaborative relationships with HEIs, mutual benefits for all collaborators and enhancement of employment-related skills for doctoral candidates.

There can be more than one student on a CDA research project, which AHRC defines as a 'multiple CDA'. These students can start in different cohort years, which constitutes an 'extended multiple CDA'. CDP nominations for extended multiple CDA studentship projects will be counted as a nomination from each cohort year covered (that is, an extended project with two studentships in the first year would be counted as one studentship from year one cohort and one from year two cohort of the CDP award: not as two from the first cohort). Extended studentships cannot allow for student start dates beyond the final cohort of the CDP allocation.

Partner organisations wishing to work together to form multiple studentship projects in collaboration may do so. They should indicate on their nomination templates how this will be counted across each partner's allocation of studentships.

Annex B: AHRC engagement with award holders

Dialogue and partnership with the AHRC – introduction

AHRC doctoral training awards represent a significant investment in postgraduate research training in the arts and humanities. The AHRC will be looking to work in partnership with award holders through the Directors and managers, to maximise the impact of this funding. Equally, the innovative research training environments created by these awards, and the experience of their PhD students, is likely to inform the AHRC's own future strategy.

Meetings with Directors of Training grant awards

We will hold frequent meetings with Training grant directors and leads individually and as a group to discuss issues, share good practice and develop informal networks across consortia/institutions.

It is anticipated that the CDP Directors will continue to meet separately as part of the CDP Business Group and that the Chair of the CDP Business Group will be invited to selected meetings with the DTP2 Directors. The representatives of CDP award holding organisations and their students will be required to participate in the CDP coordination events and contribute to joint activities.

Award holders will be expected to participate in any review activities run, or commissioned, by the AHRC or UKRI applicable to the scheme.

These meetings are intended to create an on-going dialogue around the practicalities of managing the awards, as well as respond to the evolving nature of postgraduate research training in the arts and humanities more broadly.

Annex C: Submission rate survey

The AHRC is accountable for the public funds it manages and distributes. The Submission Rate Survey is one method the Council uses to monitor the progress and outcome of studentships.

Submission due dates and funding periods for DTP2, CDP3 and CDP4 students

Setting the submission due date

The conditions below apply to all students. The text relates to full-time students but applies equally (pro-rated) to students registered for part-time study. In normal circumstances, that is, with no period of suspension or extensions for reasons of certificated absence, students should not receive more than four years' funding. In addition, the submission due date must be set no more than four years from the start of the award.

In section 3.2 we state that:

'Doctoral projects must be designed and supervised in such a way that students are able to submit their thesis within the funded period, as defined at the outset of the project.'

For DTP2, CDP3 and CDP4, the submission date for full-time students must be set at no more than four years after the start of the award (or FTE for part-time students). The expectation is that ROs will put in place processes to enable students to submit by the end of the funded period. There should be no expectation of an unfunded period when the doctoral programme is designed, and the submission due date is set.

Whilst this does allow for flexibility in the approach, AHRC would strongly encourage award holders to set the submission due date on Je-S as the same date as the funding end date. This applies to both the initial submission due date and any instances in which there is an authorised changes to the funding end date. The communication with students and with supervisors should make clear that it is AHRC's expectation that there will be no unfunded period, and the submission due date has therefore been set as the end date of the award. Linked to this, it is important to note that there is provision within the DTP2 and CDP3 awards for students to receive four years of funding.

For CDP4, all students should be offered funding for four years from the start of their award. It should be made clear to all relevant stakeholders that AHRC is providing additional funding to enable students to be funded up to the point of thesis submission. This policy is not designed to give them less time to submit though, in practice, they may require less time because the funding allows them to focus on their research and writing up.

When DTP2 or CDP3 students have been offered less than four years' funding at the start of their award, there should be options to allow for both the funding end date of the award and the submission due date to be extended. This extension can be up to four years from the start. The DTP2 and CDP3 award holder should set out clearly under what circumstances additional funding will be provided. In determining these circumstances, we encourage award holders to be flexible, as set out in the section below on 'increased flexibility'.

In cases where four years' funding has been offered at the start, the submission due date should be set at four years and it won't be possible to extend it (except when, for reasons of absence (certified sickness or maternity leave), the funding period has been extended beyond four years). It is expected that any development opportunities are accommodated within the four-year period. There should also be an understanding that the funding could be less than four years if the student submits earlier than planned.

In cases where less than four years funding has been provided, if the submission due date is extended, AHRC expects that the funding end date will be extended by the same period. This is up to a maximum of four years from the start date of the studentship.

It is acceptable for the funding period to be extended and the submission due date to be moved more than once, for example, if multiple opportunities are taken up but, up to the limit of four years from the start date of the studentship. There should be options for dates to be reviewed throughout the award as opportunities arise.

For students who receive a DTP2 award after they have commenced study, the above conditions apply but the initial period might be less. In other words, a student receiving funding from their second year might be offered three years of funding and the submission due date would be set at three years from the start of the award (four years from the start of doctoral study).

We recognise that this is a change of approach, and that RO policy and practice may mean that you set submission dates at four years. The driver is to create conditions which benefit the students by removing the unfunded, 'writing up' period. The approach is to fund students for longer: not to put pressure on the students to submit before they are ready. It is important that supervisors and students understand this aim. It is likely that, when accompanied by appropriate project design and supervision, an additional period of funding is likely to result in students working more effectively than if they were unfunded.

AHRC will be monitoring the funding end dates and the submission due dates to facilitate discussion at the annual meetings with award holders.

Increased flexibility

A further driver for calculating a studentship based on four years' funding is to allow for development opportunities to be integrated into the studentship.

In cases where the student has been offered less than four year's funding, we encourage award holders to think flexibly about the way in which opportunities might extend the period of funding required. Whilst a three-month placement is an obvious case for allowing an additional three months' funding, award holders might also consider how other activities, central to the project or student's development, have had an impact on the project duration. For example, if a student requires one month's intensive training to develop the archival skills needed to take forward their project, then the case might be made to extend the funding period and submission due date by one month. We recognise that this is more challenging to implement in a fair and transparent way but, would encourage award holders to consider how such additional support might be provided.

Submission dates and funding periods for DTP1, CDT, CDP 1 and CDP2 students

The submission policy is unchanged for DTP1, CDT, CDP1 and CDP2 students and we would not expect their submission due dates to be amended. For any awards still running, AHRC may consider opportunities to support the students for a longer period if they have undertaken significant development activities during their award. That is, there would be an option to extend the end date of their funding. Award holders would be permitted to use development funding flexibly for this purpose, provided this can be implemented in a fair and transparent way. The submission due date would not be amended; this would be a mechanism to reduce the unfunded period.

About the survey

The Submission Rate Survey is an annual survey that calculates the rate of thesis submission by doctoral students who have held AHRC postgraduate studentships in a particular Research Organisation. This is calculated as the percentage of students for each RO who have submitted before or on their submission due date in relation to all the students at the RO who were due to submit in that period.

The survey period is 1st October to 30th September, and the census date is 30th September. Je-S Student Details is used to collect information from ROs about actual and expected submission dates of doctoral students due to submit by the survey census date. Once the end of the census date has passed, ROs will be informed that the submission survey window is open and will be given the opportunity to check and amend the data for all students who were due to submit by the census date.

ROs which do not meet the published deadline for completing the survey are recorded as a nil return.

Once the deadline for completing the survey has passed, the submission rates for individual institutions will be calculated.

The survey considers all AHRC-funded doctoral students with a submission due date within the census period. This includes part-time students due to submit in the census year who are included in the RO submission rate calculations alongside full-time students.

Sanctions will be applied by the AHRC if submission rate thresholds set by the AHRC are not met (see below).

The AHRC also collects information on completion rates. For these purposes, completion is defined as the award of a doctoral or other degree. This is normally counted as the date of the successful viva examination and is the earliest date on which it is known that the doctoral degree can be recommended. If that information is not readily available, an alternative is the date the Degree Committee or equivalent recommended the award.

If a student submits a doctoral level thesis and is subsequently awarded a lower degree, for example, MPhil, the RO should record this within Je-S Student Details as 'No Degree Awarded.' This will still be shown as a submission for the purposes of the submission rate survey, as a doctoral thesis will have been submitted. However, if the decision is taken in advance of submission that a student should submit a thesis at a lower degree level, this will be shown as a nil-submission for the purposes of the submission rate survey exercise, as no doctoral thesis will have been submitted.

The AHRC will also be requesting updated information on submission and completion for students that were first included in previous submission rate surveys, and where this information has not previously been provided.

AHRC reserves the right to check any amendments to submission due dates through Je-S Student Details, and will consider the reason for the change provided by the RO. If a student's submission due date is amended without providing an appropriate or eligible reason, the AHRC will consider the date amendment to be invalid, and the student will be counted as a 'nil-submitter' in that year's Submission Rate Survey.

ROs cannot change submission or completion dates for individual students once they have been included in AHRC's survey results.

Sanctions policy

The AHRC's monitoring of submission rates is intended to encourage the timely completion of a thesis and incorporates a sanctions policy. ROs identified in the survey with submission rates below the target thresholds are ineligible to hold doctoral studentships for two years.

We will continue to monitor and sanction at RO level, even if the RO is part of a consortium, as it is the RO at which the student is registered which is responsible for that student.

The Council aggregates the results for departments in a single RO. This is to ensure that high submission rates are maintained within each RO and is in accordance with UKRI-wide policy. Action will be taken by the AHRC where an institution has eight or more studentships included in their survey over the four-year survey period and that institution's submission falls below a specified rate (see below). This ensures that ROs with a smaller number of studentships, where a small number of nil submissions can have a significant effect on submission rates, are not penalised.

The Council will look at the submission rate for the current survey year and the aggregated institutional submission rate for the current year and the preceding three years to give an overall aggregated four-year submission rate. The Council will act based on these two submission rates (the current year and the aggregated four-year rate) as follows:

Current year submission rate	Aggregated four-year submission rate	Action taken by AHRC
Any	>70%	No Action
> 70%	<70%	No Action
60% - 70%	<70%	RO will receive a warning but will not be sanctioned unless they were warned in the previous year.
<60%	<70%	RO will be sanctioned

Institutional warnings

A warning will be issued to ROs where the aggregated four-year submission rate falls below the 70% threshold, and the rate is between 60% and 70% for the current year. In this case AHRC will write to the RO to confirm that they will receive a warning for their current submission rate. The Council will also confirm that if the RO fails to meet the 70% threshold in the following year's survey for both the current year submission rate and aggregate four-year submission rate they will be sanctioned.

ROs facing sanctions

ROs facing sanctions will have their AHRC funding for support of new doctoral studentships withdrawn for a period of two years. This applies to all doctoral awards, regardless of the scheme through which they were originally awarded. Where the RO is part of a consortium, we will ask the consortium not to allocate doctoral awards to that RO for a two-year period.

Changes affecting submission rate calculations

The AHRC will take the following changes of circumstance/registration into consideration when calculating expected submission dates.

Transfers between ROs

If a student has transferred from one RO to another, the ROs concerned must ensure the student's records are properly updated in Je-S Student Details

(please note that the receiving RO needs to update the registration record and the submission record), and that the student is showing as being registered at the receiving RO. Provided this has taken place, the student will appear on the survey of the receiving RO, and will count in the calculation of the submission rate of that RO.

Transfer between ROs after the award has ended

If an RO exceptionally agrees that one of its students transfers to another RO after the end of their AHRC award, but before their expected AHRC submission due date, that student will still be surveyed under the original RO, that is, where they were registered prior to the transfer.

The date at which the student first took up the award will remain the same for the purposes of submission rate calculations.

Suspension of studies during the period of an award

ROs should update the expected submission due date to reflect any periods of suspension. However, AHRC reserves the right to revert to the original submission due date if the suspension is not in accordance with our Terms and Conditions.

Deceased

Students who are recorded as deceased on Je-S Student Details are omitted from calculations of submission rates.

Terminations

Full-time students whose awards are terminated during the first year of the award will be excluded from all submission rate calculations. Similarly, part-time students whose awards are terminated during the first two years of the award are excluded from calculations. Students whose award is terminated after the periods indicated above will still be included in the calculations.