



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

# **Student Funding Guide 2013-14**

Version 1.2

## Version Tracker

The following amendments have been made to this Guide. Please note, this is not an exhaustive list, and small amendments are not included.

Page 6 – new ‘What We Do’ section

Page 7 – clarifying statement that this Guide applies to all AHRC postgraduate studentship holders

Page 8-9 – ‘Definitions’ section expanded

Page 9, para 7; Page 10, para 11 – ‘Data Protection Regulations’ updated

Page 10-11 – new ‘Equality and Diversity Data’ section

Page 12, para 22 – updated reference to QAA guidance

Page 12 and 13 – some parts of SG1 relocated to SG3 (pages 14+15)

Page 13 – ‘Research Governance’ expanded

Page 19, para 82-91 – ‘Employment, Teaching and Internships’ sections updated

Page 28 – new section on Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships added

Pages 34-35 – ‘Vireing’ sections updated

Page 37 – ‘International Placement Scheme’ section and ‘Collaborative Skills Development’ section updated

Pages 38-39 amendments to general ‘Student Recruitment’ section

Page 43, paras 3+4 – updated ‘Part-time study’ section

Page 45 – ‘AHRC’s definition of a doctoral thesis’ removed

Page 51 – ‘Training and Development’ section updated

Page 57 – ‘Paternity leave’ sections (here and elsewhere where appropriate) amended in line with legislation

Page 63, para 2 – ‘Collaborative Research Training’ updated

Page 63-64 - Section 11: ‘Additional information for Collaborative Doctoral Studentships’, sections on partnership agreements, supervision and training, working with the collaborating organisation and interruptions to study removed. Now see Annex C.

Pages 65-69 - Annex A: Residency Eligibility updated to reflect changes to Isle of Man eligibility and status of Croatia

Annex B: The AHRC’s Subject Domain removed

New Annex C: Research Councils UK Statement of Expectations for Doctoral Training, and Research Councils UK Joint Vision For Collaborative Training

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## **Section 1: Background and Introduction**

### **Background**

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) was officially established by Royal Charter on April 1st 2005, replacing the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) which was set up in 1998 as an interim body. The AHRC, along with the other Research Councils, is a non-departmental government body funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

The AHRC operates on a UK-wide basis and currently provides funding and support in advanced research; postgraduate research and training; and funding for knowledge exchange activities.

### **Arts and Humanities Research Council – What We Do**

1. Arts and humanities research changes the ways in which we see the world – the past world, the present world and the world of the future. It enhances understanding of our times, our capacities and our inheritance.

Generated from the passions and skills of individual researchers, arts and humanities research is good in itself. It is also part of a wider cultural ecosystem, engaging vigorously in the UK's creative, educational and cultural sectors, which are among the most vibrant and extensive in the world.

Much of the work the AHRC supports feeds into this creative economy – in design, the creative arts, and the museums, libraries, galleries, publication, heritage and performing arts sectors. It is a central aim that the AHRC will deepen and expand the way in which the people, skills and research we support interacts with public life to bring cultural, intellectual and economic benefits to the UK and the wider world of which we are increasingly and inextricably a part.

The AHRC's funding complements other resources in the UK's system of support for research. Quality-Related (QR) funds – obtained by universities and colleges through institutional research assessment – provide the major source of support for arts and humanities research and its underpinning infrastructure such as libraries\*. Based on performance, the QR block grant is awarded without specifying the research to be undertaken. The AHRC's role is therefore different

and distinct.

\* At the time of writing QR represents around 81 percent of government support for the arts and humanities. Other agencies – which include the British Academy and major charities – also provide a range and variety of funding.

### **Research Councils' Equal Opportunities Statement**

2. The Research Councils aim to develop as organisations that value the diversity of their staff and stakeholders, enabling all to realise their full potential by valuing the contribution of everyone and recognising and harnessing the benefits that differences can bring.
3. The UK Research Councils are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations across and between the defined equalities groups in all of their relevant functions.
4. Accordingly no eligible job applicant, funding applicant, employee or external stakeholder including members of the public should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of: gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins, religion or similar philosophical belief, spent criminal conviction, age or disability.

### **Introduction**

5. The AHRC aims to provide support to Research Organisations (RO) to enable them to support their students effectively in their postgraduate studies. The information in this Guide applies to all AHRC studentships.
6. The AHRC intends that the studentships provided will enable the successful pursuit of postgraduate studies. This Guide is to help supervisors and other university staff understand our expectations regarding the administration of studentships; the payments we make to Research Organisations in respect of those studentships, and how we monitor progress; and the terms and conditions that are attached to grants and studentships. Should the RO need to enquire about a Studentship Grant, they should contact the RCUK SBS.
7. The guide will be updated at the start of each academic year and may be amended from time to time during the year. Any changes to our rules, regulations or procedures will apply to all studentships supported through

Studentship Grants, Collaborative Doctoral Awards, Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships, KE Hubs, or Research Grants.

8. This guide includes a section on research training which explains the AHRC's framework of research training requirements for Research Organisations. The framework is a means of enabling organisations to reassure the AHRC that the doctoral students it funds are well supported and that they receive appropriate and relevant preparation and training. The framework is flexible and takes a 'needs-based' approach covering both general, transferable skills and subject-specific research skills. The aim is to help students develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary both to complete a high-quality doctoral thesis and to move on to a future career.

## Section 2: Terms and Conditions for Studentship Grants

### Introduction

1. These terms and conditions relate to all studentships funded by the AHRC. This includes those awarded under the Block Grant Partnership Scheme, Block Grant Partnership: Capacity Building Scheme, Studentship Competition, Collaborative Doctoral Awards Scheme(CDA), CDA: Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships Route (CDP), Project Studentships, historic Open Competitions, students supported through KE Hubs, as well as any other schemes that may be offered by the AHRC to provide funding to postgraduate students. These terms and conditions should be read by all AHRC-funded students and relevant staff at Research Organisations (RO).
2. Acceptance of a Studentship Grant constitutes acceptance of both these core conditions and any additional scheme specific conditions. It is the responsibility of the RO to ensure that any student in receipt of AHRC funding accepts all the terms and conditions applicable to their award.
3. These terms and conditions are valid from 1 October 2013, and supersede all previous terms and conditions.
4. References in these terms and conditions to statutory provisions and guidance include any subsequent amendments or re-enactments.
5. The AHRC reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions. Where appropriate, we will consult the ROs before major changes are introduced.

### Definitions

6. The following terms are used in the Terms and Conditions:

**AHRC** – Arts and Humanities Research Council.

**Block Grant Partnership (BGP)** – awards a certain number of doctoral, Research Preparation Master's and Professional Preparation Master's studentships to an RO, allocated by subject and by academic year.

**Block Grant Partnership: Capacity Building Route (BGP: CB)** – awards a certain number of doctoral, Research Preparation Master's and Professional Preparation Master's studentships to an RO, allocated by subject and by

academic year. Intended to aid ROs in building capacity and developing a case for a clear strategic approach to their postgraduate provision in the arts and humanities.

**Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA)** – provides studentships offering doctoral students the chance to conduct their research in collaboration with a non-academic body and gain experience of work outside the academic sphere.

**Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP)** – Through this route non-HEI Organisations with a strong track record in the CDA scheme, are allocated a cohort of studentships for which they are then be able to nominate CDA projects with academic partners. (Full list of [successful CDP organisations](#)). Awards should adhere to the same guidance as CDAs within this document.

**Je-S** – the system used by ROs for applying to Research Council funding schemes.

**Knowledge Exchange Hubs for the Creative Economy (KE Hubs)** – operating as consortia with a lead RO, KE Hubs connect excellent research in the arts and humanities with a range of creative and cultural organisations to generate new and exciting knowledge exchange opportunities, foster entrepreneurial talent, stimulate innovation and contribute to the development of the UK's Creative Economy.

**Project Studentship** – funded doctoral student attached to Research Grants.

**Research Organisation (RO)** - the organisation, or higher education institution to which the Studentship Grant is awarded, and which takes responsibility for the management of the research training programme and the accountability of funds provided.

**SBS** – UK Shared Business Services (formerly SSC).

**Student Details Portal** - where ROs enter details of research council funded students and maintain and update details of current students.

**Students** - the term used to identify postgraduates who are funded through the Studentship Grant.

**Studentship Grant** – an aggregated grant including blocks of funding each year, covering students' maintenance, tuition fees, etc. The term "Studentship Grant" includes any grant through which a student is funded, unless specified otherwise.

## **Data Protection Regulations**

7. Where relevant, the AHRC and RCUK will use information provided in a studentship proposal for processing the proposal, the award of any consequential grant, and for the payment, maintenance and review of the grant.

The Research Councils will use information provided by ROs about students and supervisors through Je-S, including the Student Data Portal, for monitoring purposes and policy studies in relation to the Research Councils' involvement in postgraduate training, including statistical analyses in relation to the evaluation of research and the study of trends.

It will do so in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and associated guidelines or codes of practice.

8. To meet the Research Councils' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), and for public accountability and the dissemination of information, details of grants and studentships may also be made available on the Research Councils' websites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists.
9. The AHRC and the SBS, acting on behalf of the AHRC, will retain information relating to an application or a studentship both electronically and in paper form. Personal information is used to process and monitor a studentship (including both academic and financial monitoring) and may be used in the processing or monitoring of related awards for which the student may apply.
10. This includes:
  - operation of the AHRC/SBS grants processing and management information systems
  - statistical analysis and surveys to inform the evaluation of the quality of postgraduate study undertaken, and to study demographic trends
  - policy and strategy studies
  - monitoring the progress of, or changes to postgraduate study as necessary
  - monitoring the spend of funds awarded.
11. A funded student must provide, on request, a description of their work, which the

AHRC might include in any of the Council's publications, such as its Annual Report or on its website.

Details of studentships may be made available on the Research Councils' web sites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists.

The following information about training grants and funded students may routinely be made publicly available:

- Aggregated information regarding student numbers, stipend levels, qualifications, age at start, migration levels (from first degree university to another) etc.
- Name(s) of project partner organisations and supervisors
- Project titles and topics
- Project summaries
- Numbers of students in particular regions, universities or departments in context of the Training Grant funding announced.

Information may be retained, after completion of the Masters or PhD, for policy studies involving analyses of trends in postgraduate training and reporting on these to government bodies such as DBIS.

Students should be informed that the university is passing personal details on to AHRC for the above purposes.

Information may also be used by AHRC, RCUK or a trusted third party to contact Research Council-funded students. Correspondence from Research Councils to students is likely to be about funded courses or possibly asking for views about funded postgraduate training. Students may also be invited to events or conferences that the Research Councils fund.

12. The AHRC/SBS will treat as confidential all information provided and will not use it or disclose it to any other person except as set out here. The AHRC/SBS may pass students' contact details on to the Vitae Programme – in order that they can keep students informed of the opportunities they offer.
13. The AHRC/SBS will not pass student details to any commercial organisations, but may use them for future contact and when requesting information from

Research Organisations or HESA to monitor progress and completion.

14. The AHRC/SBS will not provide references or information regarding an award or studentship to a third party (e.g. landlords, letting agencies, banks, student loan companies), even in cases where the request is made by the award or studentship holder.

### **Equality and Diversity Data**

15. In line with good practice and legal requirements, the Research Councils collect data on equality and diversity from applicants for grants and other awards. This data helps in assessing how effective our policies and procedures are in eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting equal opportunities. This information may be used anonymously for statistical purposes. It will be treated in confidence and in line with the Councils' data protection procedures. It will not be used in the assessment of applications.

Under each heading users can choose not to disclose the information but it will help us to monitor equality of opportunity if it is provided.

The information we ask for is as follows:

- Ethnic origin
- Country of nationality
- Gender
- Disability

### **What is the definition of a disability?**

In terms of an understanding of what is meant by a disability, the Research Councils refer to the following extract from the 1999 Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Code of Practice – section 3: Students with Disabilities: “Disability covers a wide range of impairments, visual impairments, and specific learning difficulties including dyslexia, medical conditions and mental health problems. Some of these impairments may have few, if any implications for a student’s life or study. Other may have little impact on day to day life but may have a major impact on a student’s study, or vice versa. Some students may already be disabled when they apply to an institution; others may become disabled or become aware of an existing disability only after their programme has

started. Others may have fluctuating conditions. Some students may be disabled temporarily by accident or illness”.

### **Freedom of Information Act & Environmental Information Regulations**

16. The AHRC is a public authority for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations and is subject to their terms. This means that it has a duty to respond to requests for information from the public and to provide certain information on request unless that information falls within certain specified exemptions. In the course of responding to such requests, the AHRC will make every effort to consult with the holder of the studentship or award and will seek their consent where consent to disclose is required.
17. The AHRC may be required to disclose information about or provided by ROs. In some cases the Research Council may consult the RO before disclosure, but it is under no obligation to do so. If an RO considers that any information it provides to a Research Council would be subject to an exemption under FOIA or the EIRs it should clearly mark the information as such and provide an explanation of why it considers the exemption applies and for how long. The Research Council will consider this explanation before disclosure, but it is not obliged to accept it as binding.
18. Where a Research Council determines that an RO is holding information on its behalf that it requires in order to comply with its obligations under FOIA or EIRs, the RO undertakes to provide access to such information as soon as reasonably practicable on request of the Research Council and in any event within 5 working days.
19. In some cases ROs may be directly responsible for complying with FOIA and the EIRs; in such cases the Research Councils accept no responsibility for any failure to comply by the ROs.

### **SG 1 General Responsibilities**

20. The Studentship Grant (SG) has been awarded on the condition that the RO will provide all students supported through the grant with support, supervision and training of high quality. Appropriate officers of the RO, both academic and

administrative, will co-operate in ensuring that all students are supported in this way.

21. The RO holding the AHRC Studentship Grant, and those involved in the supervision of students, must provide appropriate support for all postgraduate students funded under any of the AHRC's schemes for the duration of their study, in accordance with all relevant terms and conditions, guidelines and regulations set out by the AHRC, and as may be amended from time to time. Equally, students supported by funding awarded by the AHRC are expected to abide by all relevant terms and conditions, guidelines and regulations set out by the AHRC, and as may be amended from time to time.
  
22. The AHRC requires all ROs that are involved in postgraduate research and training to comply with *Chapter B11: Research Degrees* of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's 'Quality Code for Higher Education' (2012), and in accordance with any additional AHRC requirements. They are also expected to ensure equal opportunities and health and safety issues are taken into account where appropriate. In particular, the RO must ensure that:
  - Adequate facilities and resources are made available for the research training
  - A safe working environment is provided, at all times, meeting the requirements of health and safety legislation, and any other legislation concerning the health, welfare and rights of students, including the Data Protection Act (1998)
  - Research training programmes contain good training in generic and transferable skills
  - It has in place procedures for governing good research practice and preventing, investigating and resolving any research misconduct or allegations of such
  - Projects lie within the subject remit of the AHRC.
  
23. In accepting their studentship, students are authorising their RO to disclose to the AHRC any information that the AHRC requests regarding the progress of their studies, the submission of their thesis (where appropriate), and the completion of their studies. They are authorising the RO to provide any such information requested on the AHRC's or Councils' behalf to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) or any other organisation\* acting on the AHRC's or the Research

Councils' behalf. Students should also be aware that the AHRC, or a third party on behalf of the AHRC, may contact a studentship holder during or beyond the life of their studentship for evaluation purposes.

\* "Organisation" should be taken to mean any agency empowered to act on the AHRC's behalf or on behalf of the Research Councils, including UK SBS.

24. The AHRC will not intervene in any disputes between a student and an RO.

### **SG 2 Research governance**

25. The RO must ensure that the research supported by the grant complies with all relevant legislation and Government regulation, including that introduced while work is in progress. This requirement includes approval or licence from any regulatory body that may be required before the research can commence. Where third parties such as a regulatory body, become involved with investigating alleged breaches in legislation as a result of work funded by the AHRC, the AHRC must be informed immediately of the circumstances.

26. The RO must ensure that the research supported through AHRC Studentship Grants is organised and undertaken within a framework of best practice that recognises the various factors that may influence or impact on a student's research project. All aspects of the research must be conducted in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, research governance and research methodology.

### **Research Ethics**

27. The RO is responsible for ensuring that any ethical issues relating to the research supported through an AHRC Studentship Grant are identified and comply with all relevant legislation and Government regulation, including that introduced whilst work is in progress. This requirement includes approval or licence from any regulatory body that may be required before the research can commence. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants, tissue or data in research, the use of animals, research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.

### **Health and Safety**

28. The RO holding the studentship is responsible for ensuring that a safe working environment is provided for all holders of AHRC studentships. Its approach and policy on health and safety matters must meet all regulatory and legislative requirements and be consistent with best practice recommended by the Health & Safety Executive. Appropriate care must be taken where students are working off-site. The RO must satisfy itself that all reasonable health and safety requirements are addressed. The Research Councils reserve the right to require the RO to undertake a safety risk assessment in individual cases where health and safety is an issue, and to monitor and audit the actual arrangements made.

### **Misconduct and Conflicts of Interest**

29. The RO is required to have in place procedures for governing good research practice and for investigating and reporting unacceptable research conduct that meet the requirements set out in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2012) and the Research Councils' Code of Conduct and Policy on the Governance of Good Research Conduct (2009) and any subsequent amendments. Where an allegation of misconduct arises in respect of a student supported by funding from the AHRC, the RO must inform the AHRC immediately and notify the AHRC of the outcome of any investigation. The RO must ensure that potential conflicts of interest in research are declared and subsequently managed.

### **SG 3 Use of Funds**

30. The RO must ensure proper financial management of its AHRC Studentship Grants and accountability for the use of public funds, in accordance with all relevant terms and conditions, guidelines, instructions and regulations set out by the AHRC, and as may be amended from time to time.
31. Subject to the following conditions, and to the guidance contained in this document, and any other guidance that might be issued by the AHRC, SG funds may be used without reference to the Research Council, in such a manner as to best undertake the provision of training leading to the award of a research degree falling within the remit of the AHRC.
32. ROs have a degree of flexibility in managing their funding to best support the students and in managing the allocation of awards within the overall broad remit of the original award, ensuring that all decisions are consistent with relevant terms and conditions and are consistent with the AHRC's strategic direction.

33. SG funds are cash limited, and the grant is made on the understanding that its value will not be increased, except as stated in these terms and conditions.
34. Funds may be used for student stipends, fees and the incidental costs of research training, such as travel and conference attendance.
35. Grant funds cannot be used to meet the costs of an activity that will fall beyond the actual end date of the grant, e.g. when a student's support goes beyond the end date of the grant or when travel falls outside the grant period, the costs cannot be charged to the grant even if the tickets, etc. can be purchased in advance.
36. The RO should not pay maintenance due to a student in arrears; the RO should pay the total sum of the maintenance for that quarter in advance, in accordance with the student's entitlement.
37. ROs are expected to take reasonable steps to recover any overspend paid to students who leave or whose studentship is terminated, i.e. money provided for the period after their end date.

### **Student Eligibility**

38. The use of funding to provide full awards or fees-only awards should be in accordance with student eligibility as determined by the Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 1997 and subsequent amendments. An equivalent set of Regulations exists for Scotland.

### **Part-funding Students**

39. Students may be studying full-time or part-time. The RO may decide on the period of support for individuals, but the student must be in a position to achieve their qualification at the end of the AHRC-funded period. Part-time awards should not be less than 50% of full-time. Where the period of support for a student extends beyond the end date of a grant, the balance of support can be provided by the next or subsequent grant.
40. For any studentship where funding is drawn from an SG, either:
  - (a) for a fees-only student, all the student's fees must be funded from the SG

or

(b) where a student is eligible for a full award, at least 50% of the total cost of the studentship each year for the duration of the studentship must be drawn from the SG. The remaining costs may be funded from other sources, such as the RO's funds, from research partners, or from charitable organisations, etc. Joint Research Council funding of multidisciplinary awards is possible on the basis of 50:50 funding from two Councils' Training Grants; in that case one of the Councils must be designated as the majority funder for monitoring and information purposes. A student **must not** be expected to bear the cost of any shortfall in funding, nor may any individual AHRC-funded student be charged additional fees above the level paid by the AHRC.

41. Where a student is eligible for a stipend, the stipend awarded must be at least equal to the Research Councils' minimum rates for the relevant academic year (including London Weighting, if applicable).
42. Part-funding is subject to the standard Research Council guidance whereby ROs **must ensure** the individual student is **not** made to bear the cost of any shortfall in funding for maintenance, or (where applicable) fees unaided.
43. Part-funded students must abide by the AHRC's terms and conditions and guidance. The RO or the funder must not apply terms and conditions which conflict with those of the AHRC.

#### **SG 4 Grant arrangements**

##### **Registration**

44. From October 2011, studentship grants have been offered for standard durations. Students will need to contact their RO for notification of the duration of their award.
45. The RO must confirm acceptance and this notification will be taken as acceptance of the grant on the terms and conditions stated. Grants announced will not start until the start confirmation has been returned through Je-S.
46. The first payment will be made following receipt of the start confirmation and will

be made in the next pay run, so in general, the first payment will be paid in arrears. Subsequent payments of the grant will be paid quarterly, in advance, except for the final payment which will be paid in arrears after receipt and verification of the Final Expenditure Statement (FES). The funding for each academic year is based on a fixed number of full awards. Grants are cash-limited from the outset and the AHRC will not accept any request for additional funding, except within the provisions of the Terms and Conditions, as stated below.

47. All students supported by an AHRC Studentship Grant must comply with the AHRC's academic and residency eligibility criteria for the studentship offered.
48. All students supported by an AHRC Studentship Grant must be registered as a full-time, part-time (part-time is defined as being no less than 50% of the full-time equivalent) or distance-learning student (as appropriate to their studentship) for the course or programme of study, at the UK RO. It is not possible for doctoral students to study by distance learning.
49. In the Professional Preparation Master's schemes, registration must be as a full-time, part-time, or distance-learning student for a Master's or Postgraduate Diploma course.
50. In the Research Preparation Master's schemes, registration must be as a full-time, part-time, or distance-learning student for a Master's course.
51. In the doctoral award schemes, registration must be as a full-time, part-time, probationary or prospective doctoral student for research or on a tailor-made programme.
52. If a student's registration ceases for any reason (other than an approved temporary suspension of study) the studentship must be terminated.
53. If a student fails to register, the RO can recruit a replacement student, provided the new student fulfils the eligibility conditions.
54. If a doctoral student is initially registered as a probationary or prospective doctoral research student, they must be registered as a doctoral research student by the beginning of the final year of their studentship. If a student does

not upgrade accordingly, the AHRC expects the RO to terminate the studentship.

55. Funding may only be awarded to students who are fully registered and should not be provided for students who are in their 'writing up' year. ROs must ensure that studentships are not used for this purpose.

### **Tenure of the studentship**

56. The student is expected to remain resident in the UK, and close to the RO at which they are registered throughout the period of their studentship, i.e. the student must live within a reasonable distance from their RO to ensure that they are able to maintain regular contact with their department and their supervisor. This is to ensure that they get the full support, mentoring, training and access to facilities they need to complete their research successfully and to a high standard. Distance-learning students must still reside in the UK, even if they live at a distance from their RO.
57. The AHRC expects the student to attend and to maintain regular contact with their supervisor and other institutional authorities, at a level at least in accordance with their RO's code of practice, throughout their studentship.
58. The only exceptions to the two above requirements are to cover periods of fieldwork or study visits that are an essential part of their study, attendance at conferences, or, for CDA students, whilst working with a collaborating organisation. The student should make appropriate arrangements for maintaining regular contact with their supervisor during any extended period of fieldwork away from their institution.
59. Continuation of all studentships is subject to the student's satisfactory annual progress, including gaining a Master's level qualification and/or upgrading to doctoral status, as applicable for that student. The RO should have appropriate mechanisms in place to monitor this.
60. The AHRC expects that, by the end of the period of funding, a student will have achieved the qualification for which the studentship was granted.
61. In exceptional circumstances, a student may be permitted to transfer between full-time and part-time study and vice-versa during the course of an award, but only one transfer of status will be permitted.

62. If a student has any change in circumstance that will affect their studentship, e.g. change of research topic, transfer from full to part-time study or vice versa, a period of suspension due to illness or other problems, or a request to transfer to another RO, the student must inform their RO, who should take action appropriate to that particular circumstance.
63. Funding for students must cease after their agreed duration. Funding for doctoral full-time studentships is for no longer than three years, unless the studentship meets the criteria for extended funding (see page 44). The duration may be pro-rated for part-time students but the minimum requirement for part-time support is 50% FTE, therefore the period of funding should be no longer than six years.
64. Funding for a student must cease once he or she has submitted their doctoral thesis. This includes instances in which the student submits earlier than anticipated.

### **Levels of support**

65. For the 2010 student cohort, and for students whose funding commenced before 2010, the RO must support, and continue to support, students at the level agreed when the studentship was made, and for the agreed duration (subject to any subsequent revision). For the 2011 student cohort onwards, the RO has the freedom to allocate the funding as they wish, provided the award given is appropriate to the eligibility of the student, e.g. an RO may not pay maintenance to a student only eligible for a fees-only award.

### **Disabled Students' Allowances**

66. Students who have a long-term disability which means they are obliged to incur additional expenditure in connection with their studies may be eligible for an extra allowance. This can cover costs relating to additional daily expenses, special equipment or non-medical help. The AHRC will consider meeting only those costs that are incurred directly and solely as a consequence of pursuing postgraduate study. The allowance is available to all AHRC-funded students, full-time, part-time and fees-only.
67. Research Organisations should undertake an assessment of need for a student and provide appropriate costs when they are required. ROs can then claim back eligible costs at the end of the academic year. Please see the harmonised [cross-](#)

[council guidance](#) for further information.

### **Study visit and conference funding**

68. A Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) is provided for all Studentship Grants through which doctoral students are supported, to enable a contribution to be made to costs of study visits, fieldwork and attendance at overseas conferences for eligible students. It is the responsibility of the RO to determine how this funding is allocated in reference to the guidance provided by the AHRC at Annex B.

### **Allocation of BGP Studentships**

69. For BGP awards, ROs have flexibility in the allocations of studentships within the overall broad strategic direction and subject areas covered in their original allocations.
70. Within this overall broad strategic direction, ROs may vary the balance of studentship awards between subject areas in which they have an allocation in order to make the best use of their AHRC funding, i.e. within the original subject allocation. In making any such adjustments ROs should bear in mind AHRC's strategy for sustaining key national capability across the arts and humanities as outlined in our Delivery Plan and in particular the need for continued support in three strategically important areas: Modern Languages, Design and Heritage. In addition, institutions may wish to shift the balance of funding from stand-alone Master's (professional and research) into more integrated doctoral research training programmes in line with the strategic direction outlined in AHRC's Delivery Plan.
71. ROs do not need to seek permission in advance from the AHRC for adjustments to allocations which remain within the overall broad remit of their original BGP award and are consistent with AHRC's strategic direction. However, ROs must contact the AHRC to discuss any planned radical departure from the original spread of awards (for example, if they intend to withdraw completely from offering AHRC awards in a particular subject, or to offer awards in a new subject area not previously covered by their BGP allocation).
72. Provision of high quality research and training should continue to be the primary consideration for each RO when determining which subjects and students it will support through its BGP allocation.

73. Further detailed guidance on vireing and the allocation of funding is provided elsewhere in this document.

### **Extensions, Suspensions and Terminations of Studentships**

74. The RO must make suitable arrangements for coping with absences of students for illness, maternity leave, Ordinary Paternity Leave, Additional Paternity Leave, adoptive leave, extended jury service and holidays. All Research Council funded students are entitled to take 6 months of maternity leave or up to 6 months of Additional Paternity Leave on full stipend and a further 6 months of unpaid maternity or up to 6 months of Additional Paternity Leave. The RO must ensure that it is aware of unauthorised absences by students, so that future payments may be stopped and those already made in advance of need can be recovered. The period of a student's support may be extended at the RO's discretion to offset a period of genuine absence, subject to finding the necessary funding from within the RO's grant. Where there are insufficient funds in the grant to meet the costs of maternity or Additional Paternity Leave, the AHRC will consider compensation at the end of the grant to cover the additional costs arising from maternity or Additional Paternity Leave providing the RO can demonstrate that it lacks the flexibility to meet the costs of maternity or Additional Paternity support and that it has no other contingency funding on concurrent grants on which it could draw.

### **Student Transfers**

75. ROs should consider requests to transfer a studentship to another course or organisation only in exceptional circumstances, and only if the reasons are fully and clearly explained. In most cases appropriate circumstances would be the transfer of a student's supervisor to another RO.
76. ROs must not agree a transfer to a course or programme of study that falls outside the AHRC's subject domain.
77. ROs must not agree a doctoral student's transfer to a RO or department that was ineligible to submit applications for doctoral awards at the time the student's funding commenced.
78. The receiving RO will be required to accept all the terms and conditions relating to the studentship as it was offered to the student, including its start date and length, registration requirements and (in the case of a doctoral student)

submission date.

79. The receiving and releasing ROs must agree arrangements for the transfer of funding from the releasing to the receiving RO. The Studentship Grant at the releasing RO will contain the required funding for the remainder of the studentship; the AHRC will not transfer these funds to the receiving RO.
80. The receiving and releasing RO must also agree arrangements for any repayments or reimbursement (should these apply), as the studentship's funding will be reconciled against the releasing RO's grant.
81. If the transferring student is the only student on a particular grant, the entire grant and any remaining funds must be transferred to the receiving institution. In this situation both ROs should contact the AHRC to arrange for a transfer of the grant to the receiving RO.

### **Employment**

82. AHRC awards must not be used to support part-time students who are already in full-time employment. Students in full-time employment are not eligible for a stipend of any kind from the AHRC (regardless of whether they are full-time or part-time students). A student in part-time employment could be eligible for a full-time or part-time award.

### **Taking up paid employment before the end of a studentship**

83. If a full-time student takes up paid employment before the end of a studentship, the studentship must be terminated unless the student has made prior arrangement to transfer to part-time study.
84. A studentship (either full-time or part-time) must be terminated if the award holder gains full-time employment, or a part-time job that is incompatible with the time required for a student to undertake full-time study.
85. If a doctoral student takes up employment after the studentship has finished but before they have submitted their thesis (i.e. during the year of grace) the AHRC will not consider this grounds for any subsequent request to extend their submission date.

### **Paid Work, teaching and demonstrating**

86. The holder of a full-time studentship may undertake a small amount of other paid work, either in term time or in the vacation, provided that it is compatible with the student's full-time studies. We recommend that the total demand on the student's time is not more than six hours a week, and that the RO agrees the commitment.

87. The AHRC encourages research students to undertake a certain amount of paid teaching or demonstrating work during the period of a studentship, if the opportunity arises. Such work can provide invaluable experience and is a useful extension to their research training. Such work may be undertaken provided that:

- the total demand on their time, including contact time and a reasonable allowance for preparation and marking, does not exceed 180 hours in any one academic year
- the total demand on their time does not exceed six hours in any week
- the work is compatible with and relevant to their programme of doctoral study
- their supervisor approves.

88. Any teaching or demonstrating work should be paid for at the usual hourly rate applicable in the RO and should be supported by appropriate training. The payment for such teaching will not affect the level of maintenance grant which can be paid to the student.

### **Taking up an internship or placement before the end of a studentship**

89. If the student will be paid an hourly rate, and will not be working full-time, it is for the student and the RO to decide whether this will disrupt the student's studies. If the RO decides to agree to the student undertaking the internship or placement while continuing their studies for a discrete period of time, the AHRC award does not need to be suspended.

90. If a student takes up a salaried internship or placement, the student must

suspend their studies during the period of the internship.

91. If the AHRC funding continues during the internship or placement, it is not possible to extend the submission date.

### **Other awards**

92. Students must inform their RO immediately if they receive or are applying for a grant or an award from another body (including from a non-UK organisation) to support their postgraduate work, especially in the form of payment of fees or a maintenance grant. A student must not hold two awards for the same purpose concurrently. Please also refer to "If a student is currently undertaking another course of study elsewhere" under Section 7: Student Eligibility Criteria for further information.

### **SG 5 Inspection**

93. The AHRC reserves the right to have reasonable access to inspect the records and financial procedures associated with Studentship Grants or to appoint any other body or individual for the purpose of such inspection.
94. The RO must, if required by the AHRC, provide a statement of account for the grant, independently examined by an auditor who is a member of a recognised professional body, certifying that the expenditure has been incurred in accordance with the Studentship Grant terms and conditions.
95. Research Councils will undertake periodic reviews of ROs within the **Funding Assurance Programme** to seek assurance that they are managed in accordance with the terms and conditions under which they are awarded.

### **SG 6 Final expenditure statement**

96. At the end of the grant, the RO must complete and return a final expenditure statement (FES) detailing expenditure incurred over the full period of the grant. The FES must be received within three months of the end date of the grant. Once an FES has been received by the AHRC, and expenditure incurred has been reconciled against payments made, the statement will be considered as final. Facsimile or photocopies of the FES will not be accepted.
97. Any studentships, e.g. those which suspended during the course of the grant, which continue beyond this period, will need to be moved onto the next grant,

or the necessary costs found from elsewhere.

98. If there are exceptional reasons that will prevent submission of the expenditure statement within the period allowed, a written request for the submission period to be extended may be made via the grant maintenance facility in JeS. This must be made before the due date passes.
99. The AHRC reserves the right to require the RO to complete and submit a statement of expenditure at any time during the course of a grant, or to provide supplementary information in support of an interim or final expenditure statement.
100. The AHRC reserves the right to reclaim funding during the reconciliation process for any studentship where a student or their RO breaks any of the applicable terms and conditions, if their progress is unsatisfactory, if they are or have been absent from their studies without authorisation, or if any other information or circumstances come to light which suggest that a studentship has not been awarded or managed appropriately.

### **SG 7 Sanctions**

101. If the Final Expenditure Statement is not received within the period allowed, the Research Council may recover 20% of the expenditure incurred on the grant. All payments may be recovered if the statement is not received within 6 months of the end of the grant.
102. The RO will be surveyed on an annual basis against the AHRC's submission rate threshold. The survey will include all AHRC-funded doctoral students. Doctoral students are expected to submit a thesis within one year of the end of their studentship, if they are studying full-time, and within two years if they are studying part-time. Sanctions will be applied by the AHRC if submission thresholds are not met.

### **SG 8 Public engagement**

103. The RO is expected to adopt the principles, standards and good practice for public engagement with research set out in the 2010 Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/per/Pages/Concordat.aspx>. The RO must create an environment in which public engagement is valued, recognised and supported. It must ensure that reliable systems and processes

are in place so that the principles of the Concordat are embedded into practice within the RO.

104. It is the responsibility of the RO, supervisor and student to actively communicate the research to the public at both local and national level, and to raise awareness of the role of research in any related issues of public interest..

### **SG 9 Monitoring & information requirements**

105. ROs must keep all information relating to their grants and included studentships updated on Je-S in a timely and accurate fashion. When creating a new student record, the "Studentship Details" option should be selected from the menu. When updating an existing record, there is the option to use "Studentship Details" where all details of the record can be amended, or "Batch Update" where multiple records can be amended, but where only some parts of the record can be altered.
106. ROs holding Research Grants that have a studentship attached to them must update Je-S with the student's details in a timely and accurate fashion.
107. The RO will be required to provide the Research Council with standard information on students and their training programmes through Je-S for inclusion in the Research Council's management information system. Information should be entered **within one month of the student starting their studies**. Failure to provide this information may result in sanctions being imposed on future payments.
108. The RO should inform the AHRC, through Je-S, of any significant changes to the student's research project funded by an AHRC Studentship Grant, including change of supervisor or project objectives.
109. The AHRC expects that the start and end dates for the funded period of study will be agreed at the outset and would not be amended during the project unless exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. if there is prolonged absence due to illness. The AHRC will monitor any amendments to the start and end dates and reserves the option to apply original dates for assessing when thesis submission is due.
110. The AHRC should be notified of any students whose awards have been

terminated, suspended, extended or transferred through modification of the Student/Researcher forms on Je-S. This should be done within a month of the change being formally agreed by the RO.

111. ROs are required to return information on the date of submission of the student's thesis.
112. The RO must make a clear statement to students, in relation to the Data Protection Act 1998, that personal information on students is being collected on behalf of the AHRC and that this will be used for monitoring and reporting purposes.
113. The RO and students must complete and return any reports, as may be required by the AHRC from time to time.
114. The RO will be surveyed on an annual basis against the AHRC's submission rate threshold (see SG7: Sanctions).
115. The RO must complete and return any other reports relating to studentships held as may be required by the AHRC from time to time.

### **SG 10 Commercial exploitation and Intellectual Property Rights**

116. Unless alternative arrangements are agreed between the RO, the student and any collaborator, intellectual property rights will belong to the student who generated them.
117. ROs should have an established procedure for dealing with Intellectual Property Rights. The AHRC does not seek any rights for itself with regard to the exploitation of the results of any funded research, but is concerned to ensure that both students and ROs can benefit from such exploitation. A student should not enter into any agreement that may affect their rights to exploit their work without first consulting the relevant authorities at their RO.
118. It is the responsibility of the RO, student, supervisor and any others engaged in the research, to make every effort to identify and exploit opportunities for wider promotion of their research activities including media activities, public engagement, or knowledge transfer activities where this might be desirable or appropriate and to demonstrate excellence and impact. They should ensure that

there is a suitable return to the RO and the researchers from any such exploitation. The RO must ensure that all those associated with the research are aware of, and accept, the arrangements for the commercial exploitation of research.

119. Collaborative arrangements are expected to be put on a formal basis through an agreement covering the contributions and rights of the organisations and individuals concerning exploitation. Such agreements must be in place before the research begins. The terms of collaboration agreements must not conflict with the AHRC's terms and conditions.

### **SG 11 Publication, dissemination of research & acknowledgement of support**

120. The results of research funded under an AHRC Studentship Grant should be disseminated as widely as possible, for the benefit of other researchers and of the wider community. ROs will have established arrangements for ensuring that dissertations and theses are deposited in the library and made available to other researchers. Students should consult their supervisor about those arrangements.
121. In the case of Ph.D. theses funded by the AHRC, metadata describing the thesis should be lodged in the institution's repository as soon as possible after award and a full text version should be available within a maximum of 12 months following award. It is expected that metadata in institutional repositories will be compatible with the metadata core set recommended by the ETHOS e-thesis online service.
122. Doctoral students should ensure that their dissertation or thesis (or any other output such as an exhibition or performance) includes an acknowledgement of the support they have received from the AHRC. It is not required that a copy of the thesis is deposited with the AHRC.
123. Learned societies and other organisations (such as the Institute of Historical Research) collect and publish information about doctoral theses completed and in progress. The AHRC strongly urges the submission of relevant information by the RO if asked to do so.
124. Students should discuss with their supervisor whether any or all of the results of

their work should be published. If a student, or anybody else, publishes any aspect of the research resulting from an AHRC-funded studentship, through publications and other forms of printed or electronic media communication, including media appearances, websites, press releases and conferences, they must acknowledge the support received from the AHRC. Please note that the AHRC will not provide funding for the purpose of publishing, presenting or displaying the results of the work.

125. Guidelines on AHRC branding for publications, publishing and marketing materials are available by contacting the AHRC Communications team, or by referring to the guidance on the AHRC website.

### **SG 12 Disclaimer and liability**

126. The AHRC accepts no liability, financial or otherwise, for expenditure or liability arising from the research funded by the AHRC, except as set out in these terms and conditions, or otherwise agreed in writing. The RO is responsible in all respects for any research undertaken and its consequences.
127. These terms and conditions will be governed by the laws of England and Wales; all matters relating to the terms and conditions will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.
128. If any of these terms and conditions is found by a court or other legitimate body to be illegal, invalid or unreasonable, it will not affect the remaining terms and conditions which will continue in force.
129. These terms and conditions together with any additional conditions set out in the offer of award or studentship contain the whole agreement between the AHRC and the RO in relation to the stated award or studentship. The AHRC and the RO do not intend that any of these terms and conditions should be enforceable by any third party.

### **SG 13 Additional Terms and Conditions for Research Organisations and Collaborating Organisations**

130. Once the offer of an award from the AHRC is accepted, collaborating partners are expected to abide by these additional terms and conditions. If these are not adhered to, the AHRC reserves the right to terminate the award.

131. The award is made on the assumption that the lead applicant in the RO, as named on the application form, will take the overall responsibility for the leadership, management and supervision of the project. The AHRC will direct to them all correspondence pertaining to the project and they will be expected to keep the AHRC informed of progress and any change in circumstances relating to the project.
132. The offer of an award does not carry any financial commitment to the project on the part of the AHRC, other than the support of the agreed number of studentships attached to the project. These studentships will be subject to the standard Studentship Terms and Conditions, as for all AHRC funded doctoral studentship award holders, and they will be expected to abide by current AHRC rules, regulations and procedures.
133. The RO and their collaborating organisation agree to recruit jointly for the available studentship(s) for CDAs, and collaborative project studentships, to ensure that they are selected in accordance with current AHRC eligibility criteria.
134. The award is made on the understanding that the RO and their collaborating organisation will provide the necessary support, induction, training, supervision and resources, as outlined in the application form, to ensure that the project can be sustained and that the nominated student is able to complete their Master's or produce their doctoral thesis within the period of the studentship.
135. The AHRC expects that all partnership agreements, financial and resourcing arrangements, ethical issues, Intellectual Property Rights and procedures for dispute resolution are finalised and agreed before the start date of any studentship.
136. The AHRC accepts no liability for the work undertaken, or for the manner in which it is undertaken, either by the RO, the collaborating organisation or the student. These parties are responsible in all respects for the work and its consequences and for resolution of any Intellectual Property Rights issues arising from the work.
137. The AHRC accepts no responsibility for any financial arrangements made between the collaborating bodies or for any such arrangements made with the nominated student.

138. The RO must inform the AHRC immediately of any changes in personnel or any other change in circumstances that may affect the project or the continuation of any studentships attached.

#### **SG 14 Additional Terms and Conditions for BGP:CB Collaborations**

139. Where the BGP CB award is a consortium award between two or more ROs, the 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 BGP Coordinator to be based at the lead organisation.

140. A BGP CB 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 BGP CB 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.

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

142. We recommend that, before commencing the award, the collaborating organisations have in place a signed agreement describing how the BGP CB award will operate, and setting out expectations and responsibilities for each partner organisation. This should cover areas such as:

- Specific objectives, obligations, and responsibilities of each partner
- Provision of resources
- How awards are allocated between 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.

143. The AHRC reserves the right to request a signed copy of any such agreement for its records.
144. The AHRC will not intervene in any disputes between the collaborating organisations but reserves the right to withdraw or terminate the BGP award if the agreement is broken or terminated by one of the parties or if disputes cannot be resolved satisfactorily.
145. The AHRC accepts no responsibility for any financial arrangements made between the consortium organisations.

### **Complaints and Appeals**

146. The AHRC is committed to providing an accessible, high quality, efficient, and accurate service in all its interactions with the community. Despite this commitment it is recognised that sometimes things go wrong. For details about our Complaints and Appeals policies please refer to our website here:  
<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/About-Us/Policies,-standards,-and-forms/Complaints-and-Appeals-Policy/Pages/Complaints-and-Appeals-Policy.aspx>

### **Section 3: Postgraduate Competitions and Schemes**

1. All AHRC postgraduate studentships will have been awarded via one of the following postgraduate competitions:

#### **Block Grant Partnerships (BGPs)**

2. The BGP and BGP CB competitions award a certain number of doctoral, Research Preparation Master's and Professional Preparation Master's studentships to an RO, allocated by subject and by academic year. The RO recruits eligible students to take up the studentship award. The BGP awards commenced in 2009 and have supported 5 annual cohorts of students. The BGP CB awards commenced in 2011 and have supported 3 annual cohorts of students.

#### **Studentship Competition (SC)**

3. The Studentship Competition, which is no longer operating, was open to students at eligible ROs which did not hold BGP awards. Doctoral, Research Preparation Master's and Professional Preparation Master's studentships were offered in this scheme. The Studentship Competition was held in 2009 and 2010.

#### **Open Competition**

4. Prior to the implementation of the BGPs and Studentship Competition, the AHRC operated an annual competition for studentships. The Open Competition last ran in 2008.
5. Within these competitions, studentships will have been awarded under one of the following schemes:

#### **Research Preparation Master's Scheme (RPM)**

6. The RPM scheme supports students undertaking Master's courses that focus on advanced study and research training explicitly intended to provide a foundation for further research at doctoral level. Studentships will normally be for one-year full-time or two years' part-time study.

#### **Professional Preparation Master's Scheme (PPM)**

7. The PPM scheme supports students undertaking a Postgraduate Diploma or Master's course that focuses on developing high level skills and competencies

for professional practice. Studentships will normally be for one-year full-time or two years' part-time study.

### **Doctoral Awards Scheme**

8. The doctoral scheme provides studentships to enable students to undertake and complete a doctoral degree in any area of the AHRC's subject domain. Studentships will normally be for up to three years for full-time study, or up to five years for part-time study.

### **Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs)**

The CDA competition aims to encourage, promote and develop collaboration between RO departments and non-academic organisations and to provide studentships that offer doctoral students the chance to conduct their research in collaboration with a non-academic body and gain experience of work outside the academic sphere. The scheme is run as a separate competition, and collaborative studentships are also offered from time to time as part of strategic research programmes such as the Religion and Society, Science and Heritage, Beyond Text and Landscape and Environment programmes.

### **Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDPs)**

9. In addition to the CDA Open call the AHRC is supporting Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDP). Through this route, the CDP Organisations have been allocated a cohort of studentships for which they nominate CDA projects with academic partners. The awards commenced in 2013 and end in 2015. AHRC has made 55 studentships per year available through this route with the intention of giving partners greater autonomy and the ability to develop strong programmes of PhD study.
10. Awards made under this route will be offered as CDA awards working to the same guidance and terms and conditions.

### **Project Studentships attached to Research Grants**

11. Funding for doctoral research students is also available through the Council's Research Grants schemes, where funding is provided to support large-scale collaborative research projects. Academic members of staff applying for such grants may include in their costs support for up to two doctoral students,

depending on the scheme, whose work will be closely related to the research project.

12. Applications for CDAs and Project Studentships are made by a department in a RO, in collaboration with a non-academic partner organisation if applicable, who devise a research topic and set out the framework for the supervision and management of the project. If successful, the award holders then recruit a suitable doctoral student to undertake the research and take up the AHRC studentship.

### **Doctoral Studentships attached to Knowledge Exchange Hubs for the Creative Economy (KE Hubs)**

13. The AHRC has committed £16M (80% FeC) during the period 2011/12 – 2015/16 to support four KE Hubs for the Creative Economy. KE Hubs, working as consortia, will connect excellent research in the arts and humanities with a range of creative and cultural organisations to generate new and exciting knowledge exchange opportunities, foster entrepreneurial talent and stimulate innovation and contribute to the development of the UK's Creative Economy.
14. Some of the KE Hubs which commenced in 2012 incorporate a number of doctoral studentships.

### **Continuing Students**

15. For continuing students who previously received a studentship in the Doctoral Awards scheme, the RPM scheme, the PPM scheme, or CDA scheme, their award has become part of a Studentship Grant. For students who hold a project studentship, their award has been incorporated into the Research Grant.

16.

## **Section 4: AHRC Studentship Grants**

### **Types of studentship covered**

1. All the AHRC postgraduate studentship types listed in Section 3 , with the exception of Project Students attached to Research Grants, and students supported through KE Hubs, are provided to ROs as Studentship Grants. This includes CDAs and studentships provided through the Open Competition, the Studentship Competition, the BGPs and the BGPs: Capacity Building Route. These grants are also used for continuing students, irrespective of the type of studentship or the scheme or competition under which they were originally awarded.
2. Project Studentships (doctoral students attached to Research Grants) are not offered as separate grants. Instead, each Research Grant is supplemented to include the value of any associated project studentships.

### **Duration of Studentship Grants**

3. Studentship Grants awarded in 2010 comprised funding for awards which were originally offered to individual students for specific durations of study. ROs must adhere to these durations when funding students. Award durations are specified in the student's original offer notification or, where amended, are given in subsequent correspondence. Je-S includes details of a student's award duration.
4. From October 2011 onwards, Studentship Grants have been offered for standard durations. Each RO will receive a single Studentship Grant (additional grants may be provided if the RO is awarded CDAs). Where funding for Master's students is included, this will only be provided in Year 1, though the RO may use the funds over a longer period if circumstances dictate.

### **Types of Studentship Grant**

5. Each RO with AHRC studentships holds one or more of the following grant types, based on the profile of students held at that RO:

### **Block Grant Partnerships**

- **BGP Parent Grant** – does not include any funds and does not have students linked to it, but is used for reporting at the level of the entire BGP.

There is one grant to cover the entire duration of the BGP.

- **BGP Doctoral Continuers Grant** – includes BGP doctoral students whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.
- **BGP Doctoral 2010 Grant** – includes BGP doctoral students whose AHRC funding began during the academic year 2010-11.
- **BGP PPM Continuers Grant** – includes BGP Professional Preparation Master's students whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.
- **BGP PPM 2010 Grant** – includes BGP PPM students whose AHRC funding began during the academic year 2010-11.
- **BGP RPM Continuers Grant** – includes BGP RPM students whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.
- **BGP RPM 2010 Grant** – includes BGP RPM students whose AHRC funding began during the academic year 2010-11.
- **BGP 2011 Studentship Grant** – includes an allocation for students whose funding begins during the academic year 2011-12.
- **BGP 2012 and 13 Grant** - includes an allocation for students whose funding begins during the academic years 2012-13 or 2013-14.
- **BGP Capacity Building Grant** – includes funding for BGP Capacity Building awards.

### **Open and Studentships Competitions**

6. **Competition Doctoral Continuers Grant** – includes students who gained AHRC funding in the Doctoral Scheme, through the former Open competition or the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.
7. **Competition Doctoral 2010 Grant** – includes students who gained AHRC funding in the Doctoral Scheme, through the Studentship Competition, whose

AHRC funding began during the academic year 2010-11.

8. **Competition PPM Continuers Grant** – includes students who gained AHRC funding in the PPM Scheme, through the former Open competition or the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.
9. **Competition PPM 2010 Grant** – includes students who gained AHRC funding in the PPM Scheme, through the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding began during the academic year 2010-11.
10. **Competition RPM Continuers Grant** – includes students who gained AHRC funding in the RPM Scheme, through the former Open competition or the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.
11. **Competition RPM 2010 Grant** – includes students who gained AHRC funding in the RPM Scheme, through the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding began during the academic year 2010-11.

#### **CDAs**

12. **Collaborative Doctoral Grant (including those awarded through CDP route)** – There is one grant per Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA), although each CDA may consist of multiple studentships.
13. **Beyond Text CDAs** – There is one grant per Beyond Text Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA), although each CDA may consist of multiple studentships.
14. **Religion and Society CDAs** – There is one grant per Religion and Society Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA), although each CDA may consist of multiple studentships.
15. **Science and Heritage CDAs** – There is one grant per Science and Heritage Doctoral Award (CDA), although each CDA may consist of multiple studentships.

## Section 5: Financial value of Grants

1. This section provides guidance regarding the financial management of the Studentship Grants.
2. Since 2011/12, ROs have had more flexibility in managing the funds and spread of awards in BGP and BGP CB grants. It is the responsibility of ROs to manage the funding in accordance with all relevant terms and conditions, guidelines, instructions and regulations set out by the AHRC, and as amended from time to time. It is only necessary to contact AHRC where it is specifically stated in this document or where the particular circumstances are not covered by our Terms and Conditions or guidance.

### Fund headings and payment profiles within grants

3. Each grant which contains payments will contain one or more of the following fund headings, depending on the studentships contained within the grant.
4. Unless otherwise stated below, payments for each year will be profiled into four equal, quarterly payments. The profile is according to the duration of the studentships included in the grant (i.e. the total payments may decrease in later years/quarters as students on the grant reach their AHRC funding end date). For 2013 and 2014 Grants, the profile will depend on the numbers of doctoral and Master's students anticipated each year.
5. **Student Stipend** – This fund heading contains funds to cover students' maintenance payments for the duration of the grant..

Where the grant is for CDA studentships, where applicable this fund heading also contains the additional CDA maintenance payment..

6. **Fees** – This fund heading contains funds to cover students' tuition fee payments for the duration of the grant.
7. **RTSG** – This fund heading contains funds to cover the Research Training Support Grant for the duration of the grant. This should be used for the purposes outlined in the Guidelines for use of the Research Training Support Grant

available at Annex B.

8. **DSA** – This fund heading will contain funds to cover already-approved Disabled Students Allowance payments for the duration of the grant (the former 'DSA Daily Expenses', 'DSA Non-Medical Helper', 'DSA Equipment' and 'DSA Needs Assessment' categories). For new claims, 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. Additional DSA claims can be made using the process described below.

### **The value of a studentship**

9. Postgraduate studentship rates and allowances are reviewed each year. The rates for the academic year 2013-14 can be found on the AHRC website. Rates can also be found on the RCUK website.
10. The AHRC does not expect any student eligible for a full award to receive less than the published rate (this includes London Weighting, as applicable).
11. If a student is eligible for a fees-only studentship, they are not eligible for any maintenance grant but may be eligible for Disabled Student's Allowance.
12. A student's eligibility for the receipt of either a full or fees-only award is based on that individual student's eligibility at the start date of the studentship and cannot change during the lifetime of that studentship.
13. All payments on the grant are made to the RO at which the student is registered, or to the lead RO if it is a collaborative award. The AHRC is not able to make payments directly to students.
14. The AHRC does not, in any circumstances, provide retrospective funding. Funding must only be provided from the funding start date of the studentship, regardless of when students on the particular course of study or research may have commenced.
15. Approved fees do not include the costs of residence in a college or university hall of residence. No separate payment will be made by the AHRC towards fees for any examination, continuation fees, caution money or any deposit ultimately repayable to a student, nor towards any charges that may be incurred for

presenting, preparing or binding a thesis or dissertation, nor any fees incurred for training courses.

### **Use of funds**

16. An RO may part-fund students in order to recruit an increased number. A student must receive a minimum of 50% funding from the AHRC grant. The RO, its research partners, or a charitable body, etc, must provide the other 50% of the costs to the student through a grant, bursary, etc. The student **must not** be expected to fund the remainder of the studentship costs themselves, nor may any individual AHRC-funded student be charged additional fees above the level paid by the AHRC. The RO should advertise the studentship as fully funded regardless of whether the full amount is coming from the AHRC or not. Studentships should not be advertised as being part funded.
17. There must be a fair and transparent recruitment process, which should not, for example, favour fees-only students over those eligible for a full award for financial reasons. The RO should bear in mind that if a student declines the award, the award may be offered to the next person on the rank list. If the person declining was eligible for a fees-only award, and the next a full award, then the RO must either top up the costs of the replacement studentship from elsewhere, or lose that studentship altogether.
18. All monies must be kept within their fund heading. The only exception is between fees and maintenance. Also, monies may not be moved between grants, since reconciliation is at the grant and fund heading level. ROs may roll money over into subsequent years within a grant. Any funds left unspent at the end of the grant period will be lost, and cannot be moved onto another grant.
19. The value of the annual RTSG paid to ROs as part of a grant is calculated on the basis of the number of AHRC-funded doctoral students at that RO. Funds from the RTSG may be pooled across all studentship grants and entitled schemes (i.e. BGP and CDA; Project Studentships are not eligible). Please refer to Annex B for full information on the RTSG.
20. ROs may still fund students for 2-year Master's courses, but will need to manage the funding from within the award. Alternatively, the money for one of the two years, or for 50% of both years, could be sourced from elsewhere. The RO must manage this; the cost must not be passed on to the student. For example, the

RO may not advertise funding for the second year only and expect the student to self-fund in the first year.

### **Management of Funds**

21. It is important to note that changing student details in Je-S does not change the BGP grant itself, as the two are independent. Where a studentship needs to be extended due to a period of suspension, for example, which results in the studentship end date extending beyond the end date of the grant, the student should be moved onto another active grant with funding available to cover the rest of the studentship. Any funds remaining on a BGP grant will not follow that student to the new grant. Any funds left over will be reconciled once the grant has finished. The flexible use of funding in the BGP grants should allow ROs to make the best use of the funding available, for example, the residual funds can be used to part-fund another student. If an RO is unsure how to deploy unused funds (in the case of a student being moved to another grant, for example), please contact the AHRC to discuss options.
  
22. Where problems arise with the management of funds within the terms and conditions of the BGP grant, the RO should discuss this with the AHRC. It should be noted that the AHRC will only permit the extension of BGP grants under exceptional circumstances.

### **Vireing between subjects and schemes**

23. ROs have the opportunity to vire studentships between subjects areas, and in most cases are not required to obtain approval from the AHRC. This may be particularly appropriate within smaller subject areas where there may prove to be more high quality applicants than places available in that year.
  
24. It is possible to adjust studentship numbers between academic years, for example, if a studentship cannot be filled in Year 1, it may be “saved” to be used in a subsequent year when the quality of applicants may be higher. However, the AHRC award will not be adjusted to allow for this; the RO must manage the financial implications across grants themselves.
  
25. For virements of student places to subjects that were not in the original award, AHRC approval must be sought. While the AHRC normally expects an RO to retain the studentships within the disciplines in the original BGP allocation and not award to new subjects, if an RO felt there was an emerging subject that it

was not possible to include in the original bid, for which they felt they could make the case, the RO should contact the AHRC for this alteration to be considered.

### **Funding for skills training**

26. The fee level used to calculate the Studentship Grant includes an uplift, in respect of AHRC doctoral studentships, to help departments and organisations meet the requirements of the Council's research training framework. The Council expects ROs to develop and enhance their training provision for all AHRC-funded arts and humanities students, and to make this training available to all relevant students, including those not receiving AHRC funding, wherever appropriate.
27. Studentship Grant funds may not be used for Public Engagement activities; the AHRC runs separate schemes such as the Collaborative Skills Development scheme for these purposes. The only exception would be if there is a skills training aspect to the PE activity.

### **Income tax and National Insurance**

28. Payments made under an AHRC postgraduate studentship are not regarded as income for tax purposes and the AHRC is not deemed to be the employer of any funded student. The AHRC will not make any payment for students' National Insurance contributions. Part-time students should check with their tax office regarding any income tax liability resulting from any employment. The AHRC is not able to provide advice on tax, national insurance, pensions or benefits issues. For information about tax and National Insurance, please see the Inland Revenue's guidance on Income Tax and Students available on the HM Revenue and Customs website <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/students/index.shtml>.

### **Other income and awards**

29. AHRC studentships are not means-tested. Any income received from other sources during the tenure of a studentship will not normally affect either the eligibility for the AHRC studentship, or the level of grant that a student will receive.
30. A student may also benefit during the tenure of a studentship from additional bursaries or other grants to support their postgraduate work. Where these are intended to supplement an AHRC studentship they should have no impact on the tenure of that studentship. Where they are intended to provide for all living expenses over a period of several months, however, we would expect the RO to

consider the impact of the additional grant on the tenure of the AHRC studentship and perhaps reduce the contribution from the AHRC Studentship Grant accordingly.

31. It is not permissible for a student to hold two awards concurrently for the same purpose. Thus if a student were to gain an award such as a scholarship from a body other than the AHRC for study abroad for one year, the AHRC studentship should be suspended for that period.

### **Additional allowances**

#### **Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)**

32. DSA claims will now be met on the basis of costs already incurred. ROs should undertake the assessment of need for students and provide costs to the students when required. ROs can then claim back eligible costs at the end of the academic year. It is the ROs responsibility to ensure that the costs committed are eligible for Research Council funding. Please refer to the RCUK website for all guidance about Disabled Students' Allowance:  
<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/ResearchCareers/Pages/dsa.aspx>

#### **Study visit and conference funding**

33. The AHRC provides a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) fund within each Studentship Grants on which doctoral students are funded to cover the costs of overseas conference travel and study visits. Annex B of this Guide contains further details about the value, eligibility, rules, and recommendations regarding the RTSG.

#### **Additional Funding Opportunities for Studentship Award Holders**

34. The following scheme and opportunities are available to those holding AHRC studentships:

#### **International Placement Scheme**

35. The AHRC has an International Placement Scheme (IPS) to support and encourage the placement of UK postgraduate students and early career researchers on short-term fellowships at a number of overseas research

institutions. The scheme is run annually and is open to UK postgraduate students and early career researchers supported funded by AHRC. (Please check the IPS page on the AHRC's website for details of deadlines).

### **Collaborative Skills Development (CSD) scheme**

36. The CSD scheme aims to support the development of innovative, collaborative training packages that will develop skills amongst students and Early Career Researchers (ECRs) for future careers in research and other contexts. There are three strands: organisation-led; student-led; and ECR-led.
37. Interested applicants should view up to date information on the [CSD web-page](#). The call is usually launched in May/June each year with a deadline in September.

## Section 6: Student Recruitment

### General

1. Student Recruitment guidelines apply to all Competitions; further competition specific advice is contained in the competition sections.
2. The use of funding to provide full awards or fees-only awards should be in accordance with student eligibility as determined by the Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 1997 and subsequent amendments. An equivalent set of Regulations exists for Scotland.
3. The AHRC is not involved in the recruitment and selection of students for studentships. It is therefore the responsibility of the RO to ensure each selected student meets the relevant residency, academic, subject and scheme eligibility criteria. A studentship should not be offered to a student by the RO unless they are certain that they meet all the relevant eligibility criteria.
4. The AHRC expects ROs to comply with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) '*Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*' (*Code of practice*). Chapter B11: Research Degrees' in the QAA Quality Code':  
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/Quality-Code-Chapter-B11.pdf>
5. Please note that the AHRC is not able to provide funds or assistance in the process or the costs of advertising and recruitment. These costs should never be charged to funds within a studentship grant.
6. ROs are expected to have suitable student recruitment procedures in place and to follow best practice on recruitment and selection and equal opportunities policy in order to identify and recruit students of outstanding achievement and potential from all backgrounds. Such procedures should ensure that students are recruited to the available studentships in a fair, open and transparent way and that the highest quality eligible students receive AHRC funding.
7. RO staff and, if applicable, any staff from a partner organisation or other external agency involved in the recruitment process should be informed about the RO's

policies, procedures and practices with regard to student recruitment and selection, and about the eligibility criteria relevant to the particular studentship.

8. In order to meet the requirements of equal opportunities and to ensure that the best applicants are attracted, the selection of students should be made through open competition by national advertisement of the studentships available.
9. On all advertisements, regardless of the forum, it must be clearly stated that it is AHRC studentships that are being offered.
10. Recruitment must take place on the basis of selecting the best students who meet the eligibility criteria. How much an individual studentship might cost in monetary terms must not be a factor in recruitment. The AHRC will continue to monitor the number of awards given to part-time and fees-only students and expects these to be in line with historical figures.
11. The RO must, as part of the recruitment process, seek any references, certificates or other information that is required to establish a student's suitability and eligibility for an AHRC studentship.
12. RO staff involved in recruitment to AHRC studentships must ensure that the relevant studentship is available and that the RO has given them the authority to make an offer of a studentship before making such an offer to a student.
13. ROs will be monitored on their recruitment and selection of students by the AHRC and may be subject to penalties or sanctions if their recruitment and selection procedures are deemed to be unfair.

### **Block Grant Partnerships (BGP)**

14. A BGP award consists of a number of studentships for either Doctoral, RPM or PPM, or a combination thereof, and against defined subject areas, each year over a five year period as detailed in the award letter, or a three year period for the BGP CB awards.
15. There is a list on the AHRC's website of the ROs that hold a BGP award.
16. The AHRC is not able to directly advertise studentships or act as a broker

between potential students and ROs. Students must contact and apply directly to the RO in which they are interested with regards to the availability and selection process for studentships.

17. ROs should recruit students on an annual basis to fill their BGP studentship places for the coming academic year.
18. Separate Master's and doctoral schemes remain an integral part of the AHRC's postgraduate strategy. Although a BGP can support both the 1+3 and the 2+2 model for postgraduate study, ROs must not offer studentships on that basis at the outset. In particular, the AHRC does not support the 1+3 model, i.e. funding the same student for 1 year of Master's level study, immediately followed by 3 years of doctoral study, without the student needing to reapply in a competitive process for the doctoral funding. This is because the AHRC believes this locks students either into or out of funding, meaning that the best quality students may not be supported as a result. It may also be necessary for a student to transfer to a different RO to complete their doctoral studies, which should be encouraged if it is in the best interests of the student.
19. In order to provide more integrated training, and since the AHRC will no longer be supporting standalone Master's degrees, any student taking a Master's degree, and funded by the AHRC, should be doing so with the intention to continue to a doctoral degree. The AHRC will only support Master's programmes that are designed to lead on to doctoral research. Master's awards made through existing BGP schemes are an exception to this as a number of Professional Preparation Master's awards are being supported through these routes.
20. Students who have had a BGP Master's award and wish to remain at the same RO should re-apply for doctoral funding, in competition with other applicants, following their Master's study.
21. ROs must ensure that the students they recruit meet the eligibility criteria of the relevant schemes for which the studentships have been awarded, whether in the doctoral scheme, the Research Preparation Master's scheme or the Professional Preparation Master's scheme. ROs must adhere to the rules of the schemes including length of studentships and minimum periods of study and whether awards are full-time, part-time or fees only.

22. Students are normally expected to start their course on 1<sup>st</sup> October of the year in which the award is made, as funding is provided on this basis. Exceptionally, students can start on the 1<sup>st</sup> January. ROs now have the flexibility to accommodate late start dates and replacement students, but the funding must be managed within the term of the Studentship Grant.
23. ROs should not recruit students to specific pre-determined research topics through a BGP. The AHRC wishes to ensure that the BGP system is able to foster and encourage innovation, and that students will still be able to approach an RO with whatever project they want to undertake. ROs will need to determine and be satisfied that a proposed project falls within a subject area awarded under a BGP.
24. Doctoral students should be recruited by the broad subject area in which BGP studentships have been awarded to the RO, not by specific project or thesis title.
25. Master's students should be recruited to courses falling within the broad subject area and particular Master's scheme (RPM or PPM) in which BGP studentships have been awarded to the RO.
26. If a member of the RO's staff is unsure about a student's eligibility, they should contact their BGP coordinator or registry in the first instance. The coordinator or Registry can then contact the SBS or the AHRC for further advice if this is required.
27. If an RO is having trouble recruiting students to fill its studentship places, the BGP co-ordinator should contact the AHRC as soon as possible to discuss the options available.

### **Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDA)**

28. A Collaborative Doctoral Award will normally encompass one studentship, but where there is a large overarching project, awards can be made for up to four studentships to run concurrently. All studentships must be recruited in the year for which they were awarded.
29. If the award is for an 'extended programme', ROs must recruit a student each year for up to four consecutive years starting in the year for which they were

first awarded.

30. Studentships awarded under Strategic Initiatives are normally known as Collaborative Research Studentships (CRS). These may be subject to additional criteria and are normally only offered as full-time studentships due to the restrictions on the overall length of the programme.
31. The recruitment and selection of students to CDAs should involve both the academic and non-academic partners to ensure both are in agreement that the best student is selected and to 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, so the collaborators must be fully involved and supportive of both project and student.
32. Experience has shown that collaborative studentships can often be attractive to high quality graduates with an interest in research that is of direct relevance to the non-academic workplace and who might not consider pursuing doctoral study in the conventional way. Therefore it is important in this context to consider the AHRC's recommendation that in order to meet the requirements of equal opportunities policy and to ensure that the best applicants are attracted, the selection of students should be made through open competition by advertisement of the studentship.
33. Studentships are normally advertised in the educational press or through jobs.ac.uk, but for CDAs partners may also want to consider targeting their recruitment at specific subject communities via subject associations, relevant websites and journals or university departments.
34. It is recognised that some collaborative projects will have originated with a particular student. Where that student has the appropriate ability and as long as 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, which 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, but it is considered advisable that the majority of collaborative studentships should be advertised.

35. Partners need to consider the nature and location of the interview or selection process, for example, whether it should take place at the RO or at the non-academic organisation's premises. Ideally, a combination of both would be useful to potential students, but it is recommended that it takes place at the non-academic organisation where possible.
36. CDAs differ in that students are being recruited to pre-determined projects, and hence need to be made aware of the context in which they are taking on their research. Equally, they must be allowed scope to help shape their thesis and have input into how the project will operate.
37. Students are normally expected to start their course on 1<sup>st</sup> October of the year in which the award is made. Exceptionally students can start on the 1<sup>st</sup> January. CDAs may be able to negotiate a different start date.
38. It is also important to raise awareness that collaborative studentships potentially place particular or greater demands on a student. They will have to balance two sets of supervisors, colleagues and working environments and deal with the conflicts, tensions and stresses that may arise. Such issues should not be shied away from and may be usefully covered at interview.
39. The AHRC is not able to directly advertise studentships or act as a broker between potential students and partners, but it will publish a list of successful projects on its website after each round is completed. The list will be published annually, usually in May, and will include the name of the lead application in the RO. Potential students will be advised to contact the lead applicant directly with regards to the availability and selection process of any studentships in which they are interested.
40. The AHRC will allow some flexibility 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. Please contact AHRC for further advice.

### **Project Studentships, including Centres with associated Project Studentships**

41. Studentship funding may be sought as part of a Research Grant application for one or two full-time (three years) or part-time (five years) doctoral project studentships whose work will contribute to the Research Grants project as a whole.
42. The studentship must fall completely within the duration of the Research Grant's project. Therefore, a Research Grant's project with a full-time student must last at least three years and a Research Grant's project with a part-time student must last five years.
43. Due to the nature of Project Students, a student should not have commenced study before the commencement of the Research Grant project.
44. Students are normally expected to start their course on 1<sup>st</sup> October of the year in which the award is made, however, Project Studentships attached to a Research Grant award can start at any time provided the full period of the award remains within the Research Grant award dates.
45. A Project Studentship must provide added value to the project, but also allow the student sufficient independence to make their own original contribution to scholarship. Whilst the Research Grant's project should be a viable project without the contribution of the project student, the student should benefit from working within the structure of the project as a whole.
46. Project Students must be supervised by an Investigator named on the Research Grant. The supervisor must be based at the RO where the project student is registered.
47. Whilst recognising the specific nature of research projects, in order to meet the requirements of equal opportunities and to ensure that the best applicants are attracted, Project Studentships should be advertised as widely as possible and by the most appropriate method to reach the target audience.
48. The AHRC will allow some flexibility if a nominated student subsequently withdraws after they have commenced study. An RO may be able to re-recruit to the studentship place but only within the first year of the project and the duration of the new student's doctoral project must still fall within the duration

of the Research Grant's 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. Please contact AHRC for further advice.

## **Section 7: Student Eligibility Criteria**

### **General**

1. The following sets out all eligibility criteria for AHRC studentships. It is the responsibility of the RO to ensure that all students recruited to studentship places are in line with these eligibility criteria. Heads of Departments, prospective supervisors and potential students needing advice on eligibility should contact the Registrar's Office in the first instance. Where there is doubt about an individual's eligibility for an AHRC studentship, the Registrar should contact AHRC.
2. Every student, their subject, course of study and the RO at which they are studying must meet the eligibility criteria set out in this guide, along with any scheme-specific guidance. Information on the AHRC's subject domain can be found here: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/What-We-Do/Fund-world-class-research/Subject-coverage/Pages/Subject-coverage.aspx>

### **Part-time Study**

3. Students may be studying full-time or part-time. The RO may decide on the period of support for individuals, but the student must have achieved their qualification at the end of the AHRC-funded period. Part-time awards should not be less than 50% of full time.
4. Students in full-time employment are not eligible for a stipend of any kind from the AHRC. Stipends provide students with the necessary support to focus on their studies: if a student is already employed full-time, they are considered to already have this financial support in place. A student in part-time employment may be eligible for a part-time award..

### **Academic Eligibility**

5. In order to be eligible for an AHRC postgraduate studentship, the student must be in a position to be awarded a publicly-recognised postgraduate degree by the end of the AHRC award period.

### **Academic qualifications required for all studentships**

6. A student should have gained an undergraduate degree (usually an Honours degree, such as a BA, BMus, BSc, LLB or equivalent) from a recognised RO, or be an undergraduate expecting to graduate prior to the studentship is being taken up. Other qualifications should be considered only exceptionally.
7. If the student subsequently fails to gain an undergraduate degree, they are not entitled to receive AHRC studentship funding.
8. Students without an undergraduate degree may be considered for an AHRC studentship only if they are able to demonstrate substantial equivalent and relevant experience that has prepared them to undertake their proposed course of study.
9. In addition, those applying for a doctoral studentship should normally have, or be studying for, a Master's degree or similar postgraduate qualification.
10. A student must have met all the requirements for a Master's qualification (or equivalent) prior to the start date of their AHRC doctoral studentship.
11. If a student does not have experience of formal postgraduate study, they may be eligible for a studentship only if they can demonstrate evidence of sustained experience beyond undergraduate degree level that is specifically relevant to their proposed research topic, and could be considered equivalent to Master's study. The RO must have 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.

#### **Eligibility to apply if a degree is from an RO outside the UK**

12. If a student has gained, or is studying for, an undergraduate and/or Master's-level degree at an RO outside the UK that is equivalent to a relevant UK degree, then they are eligible for AHRC funding. The RO must refer to the National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the UK (UK NARIC) to ascertain the equivalence of an overseas degree to a UK degree. Further information can be found on the NARIC website [www.naric.org.uk](http://www.naric.org.uk).
13. For further guidance on the residency eligibility of overseas students, please refer to Annex A.

## **Scheme Eligibility**

### **Doctoral Study**

#### **Duration of study supported**

14. If a student has undertaken a 1 year Master's, a full-time studentship award for doctoral study should normally last for a maximum of three years. Part-time studentships for doctoral study normally last for a maximum of six years. If a student has undertaken a 2 year Master's at the same institution, a full-time doctoral studentship award would normally last 2 years.
15. There is a minimum period of funding for doctoral studentships, which is one year for students studying full-time and 20 months for those studying part-time. In specific cases, doctoral students may apply to their RO for up to a year of extended funding. The extended time is intended for students who need to acquire additional skills, for example, to acquire specific language skills, high-level methodological skills, or significant and demanding new discipline-specific skill, for example, palaeographical, papyrological or epigraphical skills, or where the research cannot be undertaken in full without fieldwork being undertaken which presents significant challenges, for example, of a methodological or practical nature.
16. This extended funding is not intended to fund students for all 3 years of their Doctoral studies if they have already completed a 2-year Master's award.
17. No additional funding is available from the AHRC to support this extra year. If the RO wishes to allow a student an extra year for skills training purposes, the RO will need to find the money within the grant.

#### **If a student has already commenced doctoral study**

18. If a student has already commenced doctoral study, they may still be eligible for AHRC studentship funding provided they will be studying for at least one more year full-time or 20 months part-time (excluding the writing up period). A student who has already commenced their study on a part-time basis can be

supported by the AHRC to continue their studies full-time. This applies to doctoral students supported by the KE Hubs.

19. 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 as a fully registered doctoral student.

**If a student has already undertaken doctoral study**

20. If, by the start date of a studentship, a student will have already gained or completed the requirements for a doctoral degree in any subject, however funded, they are not eligible to receive doctoral studentship funding under any scheme.

**If a student is currently undertaking another course of study elsewhere**

21. The AHRC would not expect a student to be undertaking/enrolled for two courses simultaneously (e.g. two PhDs, or a Master's and a PhD), whether the degree for which they are receiving AHRC funding is part- or full-time, and whether the second degree is in the UK or overseas. A student may suspend their AHRC-funded study for up to a year in order to undertake study elsewhere if that study will support their doctoral study, but we would expect this study to be completed within a year. An AHRC award may not be suspended in order to complete another Master's or doctoral course elsewhere.

**AHRC-funded Master's students, wishing to undertake doctoral study**

22. If a student has been funded by the AHRC to undertake a Master's degree he/she must complete the Master's course and gain their Master's qualification before commencing their doctoral study. It is not possible to transfer to doctoral study prior to the end of their Master's course. Where a student has been accepted to undertake doctoral study but is initially registered as an MPhil student, prior to upgrading, they would be eligible for a doctoral award from the start of the course, not a Master's award.
23. In addition, if a student receives AHRC studentship funding to undertake a Master's course, it is not permissible to treat the Master's work as the first year

of doctoral study. If this appears to be the case then any doctoral funding must be reduced accordingly.

### **AHRC's definition of research**

24. The Council's definition of research is primarily concerned with the definition of research process, rather than outputs. The definition is built around three key features that students should address in full in order to be considered eligible for support:

- It must define a series of **research questions**, issues or problems that will be addressed in the course of the research. It must also define its aims and objectives in terms of seeking to enhance knowledge and understanding in relation to the questions, issues or problems to be addressed.
- It must specify a **research context** for the questions, issues or problems to be addressed. It must specify why it is important that these particular questions, issues or problems should be addressed; what other research is being or has been conducted in this area; and what particular contribution the student's project will make to the advancement of creativity, insights, knowledge and understanding in the area
- It must specify the **research methods** for addressing and answering the research questions, issues or problems. The student must state how, in the course of the research project, he/she will seek to answer the questions, address the issues or solve the problems. You should also explain the rationale for your chosen research methods and why you think they provide the most appropriate means by which to address the research questions, issues or problems.

### **Practice-led research**

25. This definition of research provides a distinction between research and practice *per se*. Creative output can be produced or practice undertaken as an integral part of a research process. The AHRC expects this practice to be accompanied

by some form of documentation of the research process, as well as some form of textual analysis or explanation to support its position and to demonstrate critical reflection. Creativity or practice which involves no such processes is not eligible for support from the AHRC.

26. For research to be considered as practice-led, the researcher or student's own practice must be an integral part of the proposed project, and the creative and/or performative aspects of the research should be made explicit. The research carried out should bring about enhancements in knowledge and understanding in the discipline, or in related disciplinary areas. Research to provide content is not considered practice-led research in this context. For example, if a film-maker wanted to make a film about refugees, the research questions should be about the process of making the film, not about the experience of the refugees. Work that results purely from the creative or professional development of an artist, however distinguished, is unlikely to fulfil the definition of practice-led research in this context.

### **AHRC's Definition of Research Training**

27. The AHRC uses 'research training' in its broadest sense to describe the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will need to successfully pursue his/her studies, complete a high quality thesis and prepare for a career once his/her studies have been completed. We aim not to be prescriptive about the type of training or how it should be delivered. 'Training' encompasses all the opportunities – formal and informal – available to postgraduate students to develop as researchers and practitioners in their fields and as highly qualified individuals in preparation for their future careers.
28. The focus is on the assessment of individual researcher needs and the provision of training to meet those needs. The AHRC considers training to be an ongoing process which takes place throughout a student's studies and is adapted as new needs arise. This means a programme of monitoring and assessment of the student's needs at regular intervals.
29. Details of the AHRC's Research Training Framework can be found at <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/What-We-Do/Research-careers-and-training/Pages/Research-Training-Framework.aspx>

## **Master's Study**

### **The Research Preparation Master's Scheme (RPM)**

30. The RPM Scheme provides funding to enable studentship award holders to gain a Master's degree where the course aims focus on advanced study and research training that is explicitly intended to provide a foundation for further research at doctoral level.

### **Definition of research preparation**

31. There are a variety of ways in which an RO can provide students with the range of knowledge, understanding and high-quality skills that will enable them to study effectively at doctoral level and continue to engage in scholarly research after their Master's degree. The AHRC recognises that there is a need to gain an appropriate combination of knowledge and understanding, general and specific research skills, and methods appropriate for the arts and humanities. Also, through advanced study, to gain an understanding of the substantive and conceptual issues relevant to the field of the proposed research.
32. Students might gain the knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of ways, e.g. through taught courses, as well as through participating in seminars. It is unlikely that there will be a common 'research methods' course alone that will suffice for all students. Some generic training in research and other key skills may be appropriate, but advanced study of content and of the issues related to the proposed topic of research will also be necessary. E.g. the research skills needed to study medieval manuscripts will not be the same as those needed to study the use of digital technology.
33. An RO must have mechanisms in place to ensure that RPM students are supported and trained, ideally through a combination of taught elements and a student's own research. By the end of the Master's course, students should be equipped to begin work as an independent researcher at doctoral level. Alternatively, in the creative and performing arts, they should be equipped to begin work as an independent researcher at doctoral level or to undertake a career in research in the higher education sector. Students themselves need to demonstrate that they plan to continue to engage in, and contribute to,

scholarly research in the relevant field.

34. Examples of skills that may apply to a broad range of students include:

- library and archival resources and how to use them (e.g. the RO's own library, the British Library)
- bibliographic resources and how to use them, using editions, using journals
- understanding primary and secondary sources
- developing a personal bibliography
- handling and managing research data
- how to cite sources and compile footnotes
- ICT skills (including how to use electronic databases and web-based resources)
- presenting papers and participating in conferences and seminars.

35. Examples of research skills that may be related to a specific subject area or topic:

- developing practical techniques (e.g. artistic or performance skills)
- understanding visual sources
- using specialist libraries, collections and archives
- using specialist bibliographic resources
- using sound and visual technology
- creating databases and other ICT resources
- language skills
- linguistic or phonetic skills
- interview skills; observing practice or workshops
- working with manuscripts; palaeography
- understanding a range of research methods, analytical techniques and theoretical approaches
- developing a context for practice-based research, incorporating it into a thesis
- conceptualising the relationship between practice, theory and criticism
- undertaking fieldwork.

### **The Professional Preparation Master's Scheme (PPM)**

36. This scheme provides funding to enable studentship award holders to gain a Master's degree or a Postgraduate Diploma where the course aims focus on the

development of high-level skills and competences as a preparation for professional practice in a field relevant to the content of the course.

37. We expect there to be a demonstrable connection between the course that the student is taking and their long-term career aims. In some cases, the course may be a prerequisite for practice in the student's chosen profession, e.g. librarianship or museum studies. In other cases,
38. while the qualification is not a professional prerequisite, in order to be eligible for this scheme, it must equip the student with skills that are directly relevant to the pursuit of a career or profession related to the arts and humanities, e.g. courses in fine art, performing arts or creative writing.
39. To be eligible for funding under this scheme, courses should offer students the opportunity to pursue practical work and related theory at advanced level, to acquire and develop further skills related to professional practice in their field of study, and to develop their own work critically. Such courses should also demonstrate a clear relationship with professional practice. They should equip the student with the necessary skills to pursue a career or profession in a field relevant to the content of the course.
40. As stated previously, any student taking a Master's degree, and funded by the AHRC, should be doing so with the intention to continue to a doctoral degree. Any Master's course supported by the AHRC should be formulated to naturally lead on to doctoral study. Master's awards made through the BGP CB and BGP1 schemes are an exception to this as a number of Professional Preparation Master's awards are being supported through these routes. Students funded under the PPM Scheme are not required to demonstrate an intention to continue to doctoral study, though they may do so. If a student intends at the outset to continue to doctoral study, they would normally be expected to pursue a course eligible for support in the RPM Scheme.

Applying for doctoral funding after a Professional Preparation Master's course.

41. The aim of the Scheme is to enable students to undertake high-quality preparation for professional practice. Courses that prepare students for doctoral study are eligible under the RPM Scheme. While the AHRC considers that undertaking an RPM course is the best way to prepare for doctoral study, it also

recognises that it is not the only way. Students may approach doctoral study from other routes, and therefore students who can demonstrate that they are appropriately prepared in other ways for doctoral research in their chosen subject may apply for doctoral studentship awards.

### **Qualifications covered by the Master's schemes**

42. A course is eligible for funding under the Master's schemes if, by the end of the period of the AHRC studentship, the student will gain a Master's degree such as the MA, MSc or MPhil in the arts and humanities. Courses leading to a Postgraduate Diploma in the arts and humanities are also eligible under the PPM scheme, but are not eligible under the RPM scheme. Courses leading to a Postgraduate Certificate are not eligible for support under either scheme.

### **Upgrade to doctoral study**

43. The Council expects RPM and PPM award holders to gain a Master's qualification at the end of their AHRC studentship. Students who are initially registered as a Master's student (e.g. MPhil), but who are intending to proceed directly to doctoral study without gaining a Master's qualification are not eligible for funding through the RPM or PPM scheme.

### **Students already holding a postgraduate qualification**

44. If a student already has a postgraduate qualification they are not eligible for an RPM or PPM studentship unless they can make a case as to why the additional postgraduate qualification is essential for a significant change in career.
45. If a student already holds a doctoral degree, they are not eligible for an RPM studentship.

### **Duration of course supported**

46. RPM and PPM studentships can support courses of full-time study that last a minimum of 9 months and a maximum of 12 months, and for part-time study that lasts a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 24 months. Courses will normally start on or around 1 October.

47. Longer courses of up to 24 months full-time and 48 months part-time can be supported where the value and necessity of the additional year's training has been demonstrated. Funding for the additional period must be found from within the grant or from another source. The AHRC will not provide additional funding and students must not be required to self-fund.
48. ROs should consider the actual start and end dates of a course to ensure it meets the minimum of 9 months duration; otherwise it will not be eligible. E.g. a course which runs from 19 September 2013 to 19 June 2014, would be eligible as a 9 month course, however AHRC funding should not commence until 1 October 2013 and should end on 30 June 2014. A course which starts on 19 September 2013 and runs to 31 May 2014 would not be eligible.
49. By the end of any studentship, students must be in a position to have completed all the requirements (both taught and dissertation and, where relevant, any practical project elements) necessary to gain the Master's degree or, in the case of the PPM scheme a Master's or Postgraduate Diploma, no more than 12 or 24 calendar months (as appropriate) after its commencement.
50. Previously unfunded students are eligible to receive funding for the second year of a two-year course provided the second 'year' meets the minimum duration requirements. However, if a student will gain a Postgraduate Diploma at the end of their first year they cannot then apply for the second year to gain a MA (or equivalent).

### **Distance learning courses**

51. If the course fulfils the other eligibility requirements described in this Guide and has a clearly defined structure, and if there is clear evidence that the RO provides a high level of support to students on the course, it is possible for an award to be given a student undertaking a distance-learning Master's degree. However, the student must still reside in the UK (see Annex A) and meet all relevant eligibility criteria.
52. Distance learning students may be full or part-time, but it should be noted that part-time awards cannot be less than 50% of full-time. This means, for example, that a course that would normally take two-years of full-time study to

complete could be undertaken as a part-time distance learning course of up to, but no longer than, four years.

## **Section 8: Training and Development**

### **Research Training Framework**

1. The framework of research training requirements was developed as a means of enabling ROs to reassure the AHRC that funded doctoral students will receive appropriate and relevant preparation, training and support for their development, helping them both to complete a high-quality doctoral thesis and to develop a range of knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for their future employment.
2. The framework is founded on a needs-based approach to the provision of research and key skills training that is sensitive to the distinctive characteristics of research in the arts and humanities, and that also reflects the state of preparation, the developmental needs and the research subject of the individual student.
3. Full details of the Research Training Framework can be found here:  
<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/What-We-Do/Research-careers-and-training/Pages/Research-Training-Framework.aspx>

### **RCUK Statement of Expectations for Doctoral Training**

4. The RCUK 'Statement of Expectations for Doctoral Training' sets out common principles for the support of all Research Council-funded students. The single Statement provides clarity on the Research Councils' expectations of ROs, students, and their training environments across all seven Research Councils. The Statement can be found at Annex C.
5. RCUK has also published a 'Joint Vision for Collaborative Training' (see Annex C), to ensure that those doctoral students embarking on collaborative training programmes between academic and business partners are provided with a first-rate, challenging research training experience.
6. For more information on the Statement and Vision, please visit the RCUK website:

(<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/media/news/2013news/Pages/130617.aspx>)

### **Researcher Development Statement**

7. The Researcher Development Statement sets out the knowledge, behaviours, and attributes of effective and highly skilled researchers appropriate for a wide range of careers. The Researcher Development Statement is an evolution of the Joint Skills Statement, and the skills and attributes of the Joint Skills Statement have been incorporated into the Researcher Development Statement. The Statement can be found here:

<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/1272-274761/Researcher-Development-Statement-RDS.html>

### **Vitae®**

8. Vitae is supported by RCUK, and is the UK organisation championing the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff in higher education institutions and research institutes. Further details of the information and resources provided by Vitae can be found on the Vitae website <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/>

## Section 9: Post-Award Processes

1. ROs have the authority to make many decisions about post-award processes without the need to have them confirmed or signed-off by the AHRC. This section provides guidance to assist in making these decisions. Where an RO requires additional clarification to make a decision on a post-award process, appropriate registry or finance office staff should contact the SBS directly. The AHRC cannot handle enquiries from students about post-award decisions; students should direct all queries to the relevant authority at their RO. The AHRC will not intervene in any dispute between an RO and a student where it is clear that the AHRC's terms and conditions, and any related guidelines, have been followed.

### Je-S

2. All records relating to AHRC-funded students should be managed by ROs within Je-S. ROs must use Je-S to update information about their students throughout the duration of their grant. It is not necessary for ROs to inform us directly, or to request approval for changes, e.g. suspensions during the period of the studentship, this should all be done via updates to the student's Je-S record.
3. At the start of their awards, ROs should enter details of their AHRC-funded students into Je-S. This data must be added to Je-S as soon as possible for all students and **no later than one month from their start date. Je-S must be updated by 31 October for 1 October starters (i.e. students who commence at the start of the academic year).**
4. When creating a new student record, the "Studentship Details" option should be selected from the menu. When updating an existing record, there is the option to use "Studentship Details" where all details of the record can be amended, or "Batch Update" where multiple records can be amended, but where only some parts of the record can be altered.

### Termination or lapse of studies

5. ROs should consider terminating a studentship only as a last resort, since the

AHRC's objective is to enable students to bring their studies to a successful completion. Students should discuss with their supervisor and/or course director if any circumstances might put that objective at risk.

6. The AHRC reserves the right to reclaim funding during the reconciliation process for any studentship where a student or their RO breaks any of the applicable terms and conditions, if their progress is unsatisfactory, if they are or have been absent from their studies without authorisation, or if any other information or circumstances come to light which suggest that a studentship has not been awarded or managed fairly.
7. The RO must make suitable arrangements for recording absences of students through, for example, illness, maternity and paternity leave. Periods of student absence should be recorded on Je-S, with a reason provided, as soon as the suspension is authorised.
8. If a student discontinues or terminates their studies, the RO must terminate that studentship. The Je-S record should be updated to indicate the end date and this should be done no later than one month from the end date, according to the standard Je-S process.
9. A student is not entitled to any funding from the point at which they ceased their studies. This may be before their actual registration ceased, for example where a student suspends their studentship but does not return from suspension. If any overpayment of funding has occurred we will seek reimbursement during the reconciliation process at the end of the grant.

### **Replacement of terminated students**

10. Students whose funding was obtained through the Open Competition or Studentship Competition may **not** be replaced if the student or RO terminates their studies. This is because the student was selected to receive funding on the basis of an assessment of their specific, individual application rather than through a nomination or RO recruitment process. Students funded through other schemes may be replaced.
11. Any replacement students must be recruited in a fair and transparent process, in line with the guidance in this document. Students should be replaced within a reasonable time period. The replacement studentship must contain enough time

and resources to allow the appointed student to achieve the postgraduate qualification by the end of their AHRC funding (and writing up period, where applicable).

12. Where the cost of a replacement student exceeds the funds remaining (e.g. where a student that qualifies for a full award replaces a fees-only student), funds must be found from elsewhere to provide the full award. The AHRC will not be able to provide any additional funding and the replacement student must not be expected to cover the shortfall themselves. It is permissible to move the student to a later grant, e.g. if there is two years remaining on the grant and the studentship is for three years. Again, in this example, the student cannot be required to support the final year themselves.
13. Where the cost of a replacement student is lower than that of the terminated student (e.g. where a fees-only student replaces a student that qualifies for a full award), the excess funds may be used flexibly to cover other funding shortfalls, within the rules concerning virement between fund headings (see page 35). If any funds are not used, the AHRC will seek reimbursement during the reconciliation process.
14. It is **not** possible to appoint a new Master's student instead of a doctoral student without seeking permission from the AHRC. It may also be possible to convert a PPM to an RPM award, and vice versa (please see Section 5).
15. Details for the replacement student must be recorded in Je-S. Similarly, if a student has been moved to a new grant, this needs to be reflected in the Je-S update.
16. Where a student terminates their studies and is not replaced, the AHRC will seek reimbursement of any unspent funds during the reconciliation process.

**Changes of thesis title, research direction, course, or programme of study**

17. Students are expected to achieve the same level of qualification in the same subject as that specified in their original application form (whether they applied through the Studentship Competition, Open Competition, nomination or direct to the RO).

18. The AHRC accepts that as research plans are developed and refined a student may need to make some modifications to the original programme of research and/or thesis title. The RO should enter changes of thesis title into Je-S as soon as possible.
19. If a student is considering a major change of topic or direction, the RO should only approve this in exceptional circumstances.
20. The RO should ensure that any change is supported by statements from the course leader, tutor or head of department.
21. ROs must not agree a change to a course or programme of study that falls outside the AHRC's subject domain or, in the case of BGPs, outside the subject areas allocated for the BGP. If the programme falls in a new subject area, the RO should consider this in respect of the overall balance of subjects within the BGP. If the RO is unsure, they should contact the AHRC.

#### **Changing department or supervisor**

22. (For information about change of RO, please refer to SG4 Grant Arrangements, "Student Transfers".)
23. If a student changes their supervisor or the department in which they are studying, the RO should update these details on Je-S as soon as possible. ROs should consider any impact that a change of department or supervisor may have on the submission date before approving such a change.

#### **Changing between full-time and part-time study**

24. ROs may approve a change in the mode of study from part-time to full-time or vice-versa.
25. Possible reasons for a change of mode of study may include changes in a student's personal or employment circumstances. ROs should not normally approve a change of the mode of study for health reasons where a suspension may be the more appropriate course of action, although ROs should consider applications where medical evidence indicates that part-time study is feasible and full-time study is not.
26. ROs should **not** normally agree:

- more than one change of mode of study during any one studentship
- a change of mode of study in the final six months of a studentship
- a change of mode of study in the studentship's writing-up period.

27. ROs should calculate the remaining length of the studentship on the basis of funding already received.
28. Where a student has changed from part-time to full-time status, the student's submission due date should be set to be 12 months after the end of the studentship. ROs will need to input this information into Je-S.
29. Where a student has changed from full-time to part-time status, the student's submission due date should be set to be 24 months after the end of the studentship. ROs will need to input this information into Je-S.
30. Where an overpayment occurs as a result of a change of the mode of study, the AHRC will seek reimbursement during the reconciliation process.

### **Early submission of a doctoral thesis**

31. If a student completes their studies and submits a doctoral thesis before the end of the studentship the student's funding should be terminated. The student is eligible to retain any maintenance grant up to the end of the quarter in which they have submitted (e.g. a student who submitted on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2014 could receive maintenance payments up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, but they must not receive any further payments).
32. The Je-S record should be updated to show the studentship terminated from the end of the quarter.
33. Where an overpayment occurs as a result of early submission, the AHRC will seek reimbursement during the reconciliation process.

### **Suspension of a studentship**

34. Studentships should be held on a continuous basis, without a break. However, a student may need, or have an opportunity, to interrupt their programme of

study for one of the reasons given below.

35. The RO must make suitable arrangements for recording absences of students through, for example, illness, maternity and paternity leave. Periods of student absence should be recorded on Je-S with a reason provided.
36. The RO must enter the details of any approved suspensions in Je-S within one month of the suspension being approved. For doctoral students, where a period of suspension affects the end date, the submission date may be moved by the same duration. This must be recorded, with a reason, on Je-S. While there is no specific functionality on Je-S to record suspensions, it is possible to amend the end date and submission date (where appropriate), and to enter the stipend and fees paid to the student in that academic year, which may need to be reduced accordingly. If an RO knows the return date of the student, then this should be entered. If the RO does not know the return date, then an indicative date should be entered and revised once the student returns. When the end date is amended, the RO will need to enter a reason why the change has been made. This is important for the Submission Rate Survey.
37. If the suspension takes the student beyond the end date of the grant, the RO should either add the student on to a later grant covering the remaining period of the studentship, or request a no-cost extension to the grant if no other grant is available. Extensions are not typically allowed to BGP grants.
38. If a student is unable to resume their studies after a period of suspension the RO will be expected to repay any funds that have been overpaid at reconciliation.

#### **Temporary periods of suspension**

39. The RO may approve a suspension of a studentship for reasons of illness, personal circumstances, or if a student gains temporary employment or a scholarship.
40. A student may wish to suspend their studentship to take up an opportunity for a temporary period of employment that is relevant to their research. ROs should not agree to suspension during the writing up year. Please refer to the Submission Rate section.
41. During any period of suspension students are not entitled to receive AHRC

funding, and we may require any over payment to be returned at reconciliation.

42. The end date of a student's AHRC funding should normally be extended by the length of the suspension. Periods of suspension should also be taken into account when the date by which the student should submit their doctoral thesis is calculated, with the submission date normally extended by the length of the suspension.
43. ROs should consider suspensions for studentships in the Master's schemes carefully, as the student may have difficulty completing their course on time. ROs may wish to consider putting studentships into abeyance for a period not exceeding 12 months, to enable the student to resume their studies at an appropriate point in the following academic year.

#### **Short-term illness**

44. If a student is prevented by sudden illness or accident from following their studies for a period of more than two weeks, they should inform their RO immediately and provide them with a medical certificate.
45. Payment of a studentship can continue for absences covered by a medical certificate for up to thirteen weeks within any 12-month period. We would not expect the end date or the submission date to be amended in these cases.
46. If the illness lasts, or is expected to last, for more than thirteen weeks, the student and RO should make arrangements to suspend the studentship following the guidance above.
47. If a student is unable to resume their studies after a period of illness the RO will be expected to repay any funds that have been overpaid after the thirteen-week period during reconciliation.

#### **Maternity, paternity or adoption leave and pay for doctoral students**

48. The Research Councils have agreed that there should be no qualifying period for a student supported on Research Council Training Grants to be entitled to maternity, paternity or adoption leave and pay. The current entitlement is up to a maximum of 6 months paid leave on full stipend plus up to six months of unpaid leave.
49. The RCs would expect the RO to advise the student of the terms and conditions

under which maternity, paternity or adoption leave and pay was given and what duration of study would be required on return to study after such leave in order for the student to keep the whole value of funding paid during the period of leave. This may be calculated on a sliding scale.

50. The RO should have in place a policy that requires it to make every effort to recover the value of maternity, paternity or adoption pay from students who decide not to return to study after maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

### **Maternity leave**

51. AHRC-funded students who become pregnant, with an expected date of childbirth that occurs during the period of the studentship, are entitled to a six-month period of maternity leave during which funding can continue. The studentship may also be extended by up to six months. After this six-month period of paid maternity leave a student may have a suspension of the studentship for a further six months, during which no maintenance grant or tuition fees are payable. Periods of maternity can be taken into account during the reconciliation process.
52. A student is therefore entitled to a total of 12 months' leave of absence, of which six months are paid and up to six months are unpaid. The paid period of absence and the suspension should be taken consecutively. If the student does not return to their studies after the period of paid maternity leave and the maintenance grant has been overpaid, the studentship should be terminated from the beginning of the paid maternity period.
53. Periods of maternity leave will be taken into account when calculating the date by which the AHRC expects the student's thesis to be submitted.
54. There is no limit to the number of periods of maternity leave that can be taken during a studentship.

### **Paternity leave**

55. All AHRC funded students are entitled to take up to 6 months of Additional Paternity Leave on full stipend and up to a further 6 months of unpaid Additional Paternity Leave. The RO must ensure that it is aware of unauthorised absences by students, so that future payments may be stopped and those already made in advance of need can be recovered. The period of a student's support may be

extended at the RO's discretion to offset a period of genuine absence, subject to finding the necessary funding from within the RO's grant. Where there are insufficient funds in the grant to meet the costs of Additional Paternity Leave, the AHRC will consider compensation at the end of the grant to cover the additional costs arising from Additional Paternity Leave providing the RO can demonstrate that it lacks the flexibility to meet the costs of Additional Paternity support and that it has no other contingency funding of concurrent grants on which it could draw.

### **Adoption Leave**

56. If a student is adopting a child during the period of their studentship they are entitled to a six-month period of adoption leave during which funding can continue. The studentship may also be extended by up to six months. After this six-month period of paid adoption leave a student may have a suspension of the studentship for a further six months, during which no maintenance grant or tuition fees are payable.
  
57. A student is therefore entitled to a total of 12 months' leave of absence, of which six months are paid and up to six months are unpaid. The paid period of absence and the suspension should be taken consecutively. If the student does not return to their studies after the period of paid adoption leave and the maintenance grant has been overpaid, the studentship should be terminated from the beginning of the paid adoption leave period.
  
58. Periods of adoption leave will be taken into account when calculating the date by which the AHRC expects the student's thesis to be submitted.

## **Section 10: Monitoring**

### **Student progress**

#### **Annual progress reporting**

1. The AHRC no longer asks the RO to confirm the progress of students at the end of each academic year. However, we encourage ROs to ensure that student progress is satisfactory and that students have met the relevant terms and conditions. ROs will also be required to update Je-S when changes to the student's circumstances occur, and on an annual basis.
  
2. Examples of things ROs should monitor are:
  - The student is progressing with the research project or course that they were originally funded to undertake and are on target to complete within the required time-frame.
  
  - Any pending Master's qualification that was outstanding at the time the studentship was offered has now been awarded.
  
  - Doctoral students about to enter their final year of funding have upgraded to full doctoral status.

#### **Annual progress reporting for Collaborative Doctoral Awards**

3. The AHRC may request the completion of interim reports from time to time, by both the academic and non-academic supervisors and by the student. These reports will enable the AHRC to monitor the progress of the project and collaboration itself.

#### **End of award reports**

4. Student Finisher reports are no longer required, but the AHRC reserves the right to request a report or information on the work the student has undertaken and research training and support they have received, at any time.

5. A final award report will be required for CDAs, CDPs, the parent grant for BGPs and BGP-CBs, and for the KE Hub studentships. The AHRC expects a high quality of research and training support to be provided for the student and anticipates that ROs will have their own internal monitoring in place to ensure that this level of support is provided.

### **Difficulties encountered during the course of study**

6. It is important that students and their supervisors inform the relevant authorities at the RO about any circumstances that may significantly affect the student's progress. These may include health problems, personal difficulties, or problems with access to libraries, archives or other research materials. As such problems may affect the tenure of a studentship it is important that, where possible, they are dealt with at an early stage to enable all concerned to find solutions to help a student continue their studies.

### **Completion of Master's or Diploma courses**

7. The AHRC will monitor whether or not students succeed in gaining the qualification for which they were aiming when they took up their studentship for a Master's or Diploma course. ROs are required to respond to an annual survey that is conducted on the AHRC's behalf by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and which monitors completion rates in ROs.

### **Submission Rate Monitoring**

#### **Doctoral submission rates**

8. In making studentship awards for doctoral research, the AHRC assumes that doctoral students will complete a piece of work (usually a thesis) that (a) exhibits substantial evidence of original scholarship and contains material that can be prepared for publication, and (b) is produced by a capable, well-qualified, well-trained and diligent research student, properly supervised and supported by their RO.
9. On accepting a studentship to pursue a programme of doctoral research a student also accepts a commitment to make every effort to complete their project, and to submit their thesis, if possible by the end of the period of funding, but no

later than one year from the end of the studentship if they have a full-time studentship, or no later than two years if they hold a part-time studentship. By the end of the studentship they are expected to have completed their thesis, or to be close to completion. The additional year(s) after the end of a studentship and before the submission date provides an opportunity to meet any unforeseen circumstances that have arisen during the course of the studentship. This additional year is not funded by the AHRC. Submission dates are now calculated in terms of years after the end of a studentship, not from the start of the studentship or doctoral research, as previously.

10. On accepting an award which includes studentships to pursue programmes of doctoral research, the RO also accepts a commitment to support the student throughout the duration of his/her studies to 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 in order to enable the RO to maintain its submission rates.
11. The RO may require a different submission date from that specified by the AHRC and students should check this with them.
12. For existing students, the submission date will have been populated in Je-S. These dates reflect the previous rules on setting the submission date. The date should not be updated unless there is a change in the student's circumstances, where such a change is permissible. It is the RO's responsibility to inform students of any changes to their submission date resulting from suspensions or submission date extensions.
13. When the RO alters a submission 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.
14. Students in receipt of four years' support who were eligible for the new extended funding introduced in 2006, must still submit within four years for a full-time studentship or seven years for a part-time studentship.

### **Submission rate surveys**

15. Each year, the AHRC collects information from ROs on the submission and completion rates of students who took up studentships four, five and six years

previously. This data is used to measure the performance of ROs in meeting the targets set for the successful submission and completion of theses by AHRC-funded students. Sanctions are applied at an organisational level only. Full details of the AHRC's submission rate policy can be found on the website at <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funded-Research/Statistics/Submission-rate-policy/Pages/Submission-rate-policy.aspx>.

16. If a student is allowed to transfer their studentship to another RO, that receiving organisation takes on the responsibility for ensuring that the original submission target date is met. To ensure that the student appears on the new RO's submission rate survey, it is important that Je-S is updated correctly. This will require both ROs involved to liaise about dates and finances. In Je-S, the original RO should no longer be marked as the "Degree awarding organisation", or the "Submitting RO", and the new RO should be added and marked as the "Degree awarding organisation, and the "submitting RO". Dates should also be updated where necessary.
17. If a studentship is transferred to another RO after their studentship has ended, i.e. during the writing up period, that student's submission will count for the RO that supported the studentship rather than the new RO.
18. While survey data is analysed, and any sanctions are applied at RO level, we may contact the RO about the performance of individual departments if there are particular issues or causes for concern.

#### **Extensions to submission dates**

19. The RO is responsible for considering the request for extensions to submission dates in accordance with the guidelines below: it is not necessary for AHRC to approve them. If the extension is eligible and agreed by the RO, the RO will need to amend the submission date on Je-S, and add an appropriate reason, as shown in the bullet points below.
20. If the reason for the extension is not in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award, as set out in this guide, or insufficient detail regarding the reason for this change has been recorded in Je-S, the AHRC reserves the right to contact the RO to query the change in submission date. We also reserve the right to revert to the original submission date if the extension is not permissible within our terms and conditions.

21. The expectation is that a student should aim to complete their doctoral work during the course of their studentship, and at the latest within the unfunded year (or years for a part-time student) of grace that allows the student to finalise the submission of their thesis, and to take account of unforeseen circumstances that may have arisen during the course of their research. Full-time students are not encouraged to take up employment until after submitting their thesis.
22. The AHRC will normally accept a submission date extended by the RO to take account of any period of suspension notified during a studentship. Only in exceptional circumstances will we accept the RO extending the target date for submission on account of difficulties that arise during the writing up period. Exceptional circumstances may include illness, accident, exceptional personal circumstances, maternity, paternity, or adoption.

Circumstance in which extensions will not be approved are as follows:

- Extensions to submission date will not be approved for a student who has taken up employment of any kind during their writing up year.
  - Extensions to submission date will not be approved retrospectively where the RO was not informed at the time about difficulties which arose during the course of the studentship or about periods of suspension.
  - Extensions to submission date will not be approved for periods of illness if appropriate medical certificates were not submitted to the RO at the time.
23. Students and supervisors should keep the relevant authorities in their RO informed at the time of any circumstance that may adversely affect a student's ability to submit their doctoral work on time.
  24. If a student suspends during the period of funding, the RO must amend the end date of the award, and the submission date on Je-S, and add a reason.
  25. During the Submission Rate Survey, the AHRC will check to see whether any students have had amendments made to their submission date through Je-S and will consider the reason for the change provided by the RO. If a student's

submission 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.

26. If, having read the guidance above, you are still unsure whether a student within their writing up year has a valid reason to extend their submission date then please contact the AHRC (via email at: [psa@ahrc.ac.uk](mailto:psa@ahrc.ac.uk)).

#### **Exclusion from submission rate surveys**

27. If a studentship is terminated before the end of the first year of funding, for whatever reason, the student will be excluded from the AHRC's submission rate surveys.
28. Students who die before submission are omitted from calculations of submission rates.

#### **First employment destinations**

29. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) will conduct on the AHRC's behalf an annual survey of the first employment destinations of funded students and ROs will be required to submit an annual return. This provides the Council with useful information about the progress of funded students in the labour market, and the AHRC asks students to co-operate by keeping their RO informed about their employment. The AHRC also participates in wider surveys and studies of the career paths of funded students. The AHRC asks for co-operation in such surveys.

## **Section 11: Additional information for Collaborative Doctoral Studentships**

1. If a studentship has been made under the CDA scheme (through the Open call or CDP route) the terms, conditions, information and guidance as stated in this guide apply to those studentships. However, there are some additional features of collaborative studentships and further guidance and information is given below.

### **Expectations for Collaborative Research Training**

2. The Research Councils' expectations for collaborations, and their *Joint Vision for Collaborative Training*, are given in Annex C.

### **The value of a Collaborative Doctoral Award**

3. A doctoral student is entitled to standard tuition fees and, if entitled to a full-award, a maintenance grant. In addition, all studentships in this scheme may receive an additional sum towards their maintenance.
4. Where the non-academic 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.
5. All holders of studentships are eligible to apply for Disabled Students' Allowance, if appropriate.

### **RTSG funding**

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

### **Transfer of collaborative awards and studentships**

7. Collaborative awards are made on the basis of a partnership between an RO and a collaborating external organisation. A student will have agreed to working with

those partners on the specified project and to remaining registered at the relevant RO. A student 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 be in agreement and a student would not be under any obligation to transfer.

### **Conversion of collaborative studentships**

8. 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, that adequate supervision is available and that they will be able to complete their thesis within the required time.

### **Monitoring of Collaborative Doctoral Awards**

9. The AHRC no longer requires annual reports on the progress of the project. This is in line with changes that have been implemented in relation to AHRC funded studentships awarded through other schemes.

### **Submission of thesis**

10. The policy on thesis submission is the same as for other AHRC-funded students, please see Section 10 for details.
11. 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.

### **Feedback and further information**

12. If a student or the collaborating partners have any questions about the operation and administration of a collaborative doctoral award or studentship please contact Programmes Division for further advice. Contact details are available on

the AHRC website here:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/About-Us/Contact-Us/Pages/Contact-us.aspx>

13. The AHRC welcomes feedback on the experiences of collaborative working. This will be used to improve our guidance to applicants, award holders and students in the future.

## **Annex A: Residency Eligibility**

1. There are two types of studentship awards:
  - A full studentship award – this covers the cost of approved tuition fees and provides a maintenance grant.
  - A fees-only studentship award – this covers the cost of approved tuition fees, but no maintenance grant is provided.
2. In order to be eligible for one of these studentship awards, a student must meet certain conditions relating to residence. This section describes these eligibility criteria. In offering a studentship, the RO is confirming that they have checked the eligibility of the student. The RO is responsible for determining the residency status, based on the information provided by the student, and in accordance with the rules followed by the Research Councils. The AHRC reserves the right to reclaim funding for any student that has been supported through AHRC funding which AHRC deems to be ineligible.
3. Please note that the status of the award (e.g. full or fees-only) is determined at the start of the award and cannot be changed once an award is made. For example a student cannot 'upgrade' from a fees-only to a full award once their award has been made.
4. Students are expected to remain resident in the UK, and close to the RO at which they are registered throughout the period of their award (unless registered as a Master's distance learning student, in which case they must still reside in the UK), i.e. the student must live within a reasonable distance from their RO to ensure that they are able to maintain regular contact with their department and their supervisor. This is to ensure that they get the full support, mentoring, training and access to facilities they need to complete their research successfully and to a high standard. The only exceptions to these requirements are to cover periods of fieldwork or study visits that are an essential part of their study, attendance at conferences and, for CDA studentships, whilst working with a collaborating organisation.

## Residence

5. The legal basis for defining residence eligibility for postgraduate training awards is set down in the *Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 1997*[1]. The guidance below is based on the *Regulations* and on guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)[2]·[3]. Candidates for awards must have a relevant connection with the United Kingdom. A relevant connection may be established if, at the start of the course:
  - The student has been ordinarily resident in the UK throughout the 3-year period preceding the date of application for an award, **and**
  - Has not been resident in the UK, during any part of that 3-year period wholly or mainly for the purposes of full-time education (EU students – see below), **and**
  - Has settled status in the UK within the meaning of the Immigration Act 1971 (i.e. is not subject to any restriction on the period for which he/she may stay).
6. A relevant connection may be established for an **EU student** if the student has been ordinarily resident in the UK throughout the 3-year period preceding the start of the course (including for full-time education).
7. British citizens are not subject to immigration control but only those other nationals who have been granted written permission to stay in the UK permanently are settled.

## Temporary absence

8. A UK citizen may have spent an extended period living outside the UK, either for study or employment.
9. Most students in these circumstances will be able to show that they have maintained a relevant connection with their home country and therefore claim

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[1] *The education (Fees and Award) regulations 1997*. Statutory Instrument 1997 No. 1972.

[2] *Guidance on Fees. The Education (Fees & Awards) Regulations 1997*. Department for Education and Employment 1998. ISBN 0 85522 771 0.

[3] *Higher Education Student Support in England and Wales in 2001/02: Chapter 3 – Assessing Eligibility*.

that the absence was temporary. "Temporary" does not depend solely on the length of the absence.

10. For the purposes of eligibility, a period of ordinary residence will not be treated as being interrupted by an absence which is caused by:

- The temporary absence abroad, by reasons of training or employment, of the candidate, the candidate's spouse or parents, or
- The temporary full-time education abroad of the candidate or spouse.

11. An expatriate, or the child of an expatriate, who may have been born in the UK or abroad, and appears to have returned to the UK for full-time education, is required to establish temporary absence. In order to be eligible, it must be shown that:

- The absence abroad was involuntary, and attempts were made to remedy the breach with the UK at the earliest opportunity
- There was no individual intention to sever links with the UK, and
- Links have been maintained or re-established through visits, vacation work and subsequent re-settlement in the UK.

12. It should be noted that anyone who is resident in a country is normally subject to the residence and tax conditions of that country. A resident may or may not acquire other rights by virtue of living there, but birth or long-term residence does not automatically confer similar rights to citizens of that country. If a student has opted for full citizenship of a country other than the UK, then it should be assumed that the candidate will be ineligible.

### **Indefinite Leave to Remain**

13. Students who have been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILTR) by the Home Office have been given the right to reside in the UK, and thus have settled status. ILTR is usually given to those who have already spent a period of time in the UK, and are looking to take up British Citizenship. A student who holds ILTR must nevertheless establish a relevant connection as set out in the introduction above.

### **Refugees, Humanitarian Protection and Discretionary Leave**

14. A student who has been granted full refugee status by the Home Office, or is the

child or spouse of a refugee, has settled status and is eligible on residence grounds, provided that he/she has not ceased to be resident since being granted asylum or refugee status. Such students must provide documentary evidence of their status, usually in the form of a letter from the Immigration and Nationality Department of the Home Office. Refugees do not have to meet the requirement of three years' residence.

15. Students who are 'asylum seekers' are required to demonstrate settled status to be eligible.
16. Students who have not been recognised by the Home Office as meeting the terms of the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees may be granted Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary leave. The granting of Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave circumstances makes it impossible for him/her to return home at that time. Thus, the holder will normally be allowed to stay in the UK for three years. After this the award will be actively reviewed. Also, he/she is entitled to work in the UK and claim unemployment benefit and, after a certain period of residence, may be able to apply for ILTR, and subsequently British Citizenship.
17. Students who have been granted Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary leave do not have the same entitlements as refugees. They will, however, be eligible on residence grounds if they have spent the previous three years in the UK, not wholly or mainly for the purpose of receiving full-time education.

#### **Visas, Work Permits etc**

18. Students who are resident in the UK on a student visa, work permit or dependant visa have restrictions on the time they may stay in the UK and cannot demonstrate a relevant connection or settled status. They will not therefore be eligible on residence grounds.

#### **Fees-only Awards**

19. Students from EU countries other than the UK are generally eligible (subject to their eligibility on grounds of academic qualifications) for awards restricted to the payment of tuition fees only and no maintenance award. In order to be eligible for a fees-only award, a student must be ordinarily resident in a member state of the EU, in the same way as UK students must be ordinarily resident in the UK.

20. Currently, the member states of the Economic Union are as follows: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark [4], Finland, France [5], Germany [6], Greece, The Irish Republic (Eire), Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands [7], Portugal [8], Romania, Spain [9], Sweden, Cyprus, The Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, The Slovak Republic, and Slovenia.
21. Gibraltar is part of the EU, and students from Gibraltar are to be treated as other EU nationals.
22. The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are not part of the EU (see below). However, students who are ordinarily resident on the Isle of Man are now eligible for a full award. The UK Dependent Territories are also not part of the EU. The independent states of Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and The Vatican are not part of the European Union.
23. The implementation of the Switzerland Agreement means that permanent residence in Switzerland is no longer a bar to EU nationals being classed as "EU Students". Swiss nationals do not qualify to be considered as EU students.

### **Migrant workers**

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[4] **Greenland** and the **Faroe Islands** are not part of the EU

[5] The French Overseas Departments (DOMs) of **Guadeloupe**, **Martinique**, **French Guyana**, and **Reunion** are part of Metropolitan France, and the treaties apply. However, French Overseas Territories (TOMs) e.g. **French Polynesia**, are not part of the EU.

[6] **Heligoland**, although a tax free port, is part of the EU.

[7] The **Netherlands Antilles** are not part of the EU.

[8] **Madeira** and **The Azores** are part of the EU under special terms. **Macao** is not part of the EU.

[9] The **Balearic Islands**, the **Canary Islands**, **Ceuta** and **Melilla** are all part of the EU.

24. Articles 7 (2) and Article 12 of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1612/68 allow for candidates who have established a relevant connection with a member state of the EU to be eligible for a full award to include maintenance, as 'migrant workers', in that member state. A migrant worker can be defined as an EU citizen that is employed in a member state of the EU who should be treated as a national of that member state. Similarly, a child or spouse of a migrant worker is also eligible to be treated in the same way. However, the following conditions must be met:

- The employment must be full-time and of significant duration. Therefore, a candidate engaged in part-time or short-term casual employment, or who has been effectively unemployed, cannot be considered to hold migrant worker status. Additionally, the employment should normally be expected to be relevant to their previous or future course of study, although employment of a 'professional' nature may be considered on its merits
- The employment should not be considered to be ancillary, i.e. taken up with a view towards engaging in subsequent studies (job and study are a package), or subject to the candidate being accepted for the training for which s/he has is to be nominated. An example of this would be a candidate who has been employed as a Research Assistant in a Research Organisation department where a future award is to be held
- With regard to the children of migrant workers (Article 12), it must be shown that the candidate's residence is as a consequence of their parent's past or present employment. A child who has not been resident in the UK during the parent's employment, or departed with the parent at the cessation of that employment, will not be eligible to claim migrant worker status.

25. The arrangements for migrant workers are also extended to candidates who are nationals of the EEA member states of Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway, and to Swiss migrant workers. Where such candidates meet the migrant worker requirements they will be eligible for full awards. However, as these countries are not member states of the EU, candidates will be ineligible for fees-only awards. A candidate must have been 'ordinarily resident' in the EEA or Switzerland for at least three years prior to the date of the course's commencement.

26. If a candidate qualifies as the child of a 'Turkish worker' s/he will be entitled to a full award if:

- s/he is the child of a Turkish national who is ordinarily resident in the UK, and who is, or has been, lawfully employed in the UK
- s/he has been 'ordinarily resident' in the EEA, Switzerland or Turkey for at least three years at the date of commencement of the course
- s/he will be resident in the UK on the first day of the academic year on which the course commences.

### **Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man**

27. A student who is ordinarily resident in Northern Ireland is eligible to receive a full studentship award. The Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI) makes available some funding for postgraduate study in Northern Ireland, with the Universities responsible for administering the scheme. Candidates should contact their RO for further information. Students may not hold awards from both the Research Council and DELNI for the same purpose.

28. A student who is ordinarily resident in the Channel Islands is eligible to receive a full studentship award.

A student who is ordinarily resident in the Isle of Man is eligible for a full award.

## **Annex B: Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)**

1. The Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) is provided to cover costs incurred within any Studentship Grant through which doctoral students are supported under BGP or CDA awards. Full award, fees-only, full-time, part-time, and distance learning doctoral award holders are all eligible to receive RTSG support. Project students and Master's level students are not eligible for RTSG support. It is the responsibility of the RO to determine how this funding is allocated, within the guidelines provided by the AHRC.
2. The value of the annual RTSG paid to ROs as part of a grant is calculated on the basis of the number of AHRC-funded doctoral students at that RO. Each doctoral student is counted towards this calculation for a maximum of three years. Although the total RTSG amount on a grant is calculated on the basis of an amount per doctoral student per year, there is no limit to the amount of funding any one student can receive from the total RTSG pot allocated to the RO for a grant. ROs are advised not to consider the RTSG as a £200 per year 'voucher' for each individual AHRC-funded student, but rather to consider the total RTSG payment on a grant as a pot from which it allocates funds on the basis of student needs and priorities.
3. Funds from the RTSG may be pooled across all studentship grants and entitled schemes (i.e. BGP and CDA; Project Studentships are not eligible). At final reconciliation stage, ROs are required to declare how much in total has been spent of the RTSG in Je-S; ROs are not required to reconcile the amount by student in Je-S. However, ROs should maintain a robust accounting system of the amounts spent on each eligible AHRC-funded student and should be able to demonstrate a transparent and fair process for awarding RTSG funding to eligible AHRC-funded students. These records will be included in the Funding Assurance Programme (FAP), and the AHRC is entitled to request these records at any time.
4. While it is the RO's responsibility to decide which students it wishes to fund using the RTSG, we recommend that, when considering applications, ROs prioritise students who have not previously received RTSG funding during their course of study. The RO should also ensure a process is in place for managing the RTSG such that it is responsive to the needs of its students.

5. RTSG funding can be used to fund the following:

#### **Attendance at overseas conferences**

- N.B. Attendance at UK conferences cannot be funded from the RTSG.
- We would not normally expect a student to receive funding to attend more than one overseas conference, although this is at the RO's discretion.
- Funding must not be provided for students in the writing-up stage of their course/project.
- Conference attendance must not take place before 1st October in the first year of a student's award.

#### **UK and overseas study visits**

- We would not normally expect a student to go on more than one overseas study visit, although this is at the RO's discretion.
  - We would not normally expect a student to go on an overseas study visit to multiple countries, although this is at the RO's discretion.
  - Any funded study visits must be for the purposes of conducting primary research. It is the RO's responsibility to assess whether a student's proposed trip qualifies as primary research.
  - All study visits must be essential to the satisfactory completion of the student's thesis/course.
  - The duration of a study visit should not exceed 12 months, although this is at the RO's discretion.
  - It is the RO's responsibility to ensure that it is satisfied with the student's programme of research, and that the student has obtained the necessary visas and permissions for it, and taken proper account of any health, safety and security issues.
  - 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, although this is at the RO's discretion.
  - Funding must not be provided for students in the writing-up stage of their course/project.
  - Study visits must not take place before 1st October in the first year of a student's award.
6. Students cannot purchase tickets for travel which will take place after the end of the studentship award or the end of the grant.
  7. 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. However, as there are only limited funds available, we recommend that travel should be by the most economical means available.
  8. It is the RO's responsibility to ensure that the costs incurred on the study visit or conference are reasonable. As the RTSG is provided from the public purse, the RO should ensure that the funds are used responsibly.
  9. Wherever possible, we expect students to remain in regular contact with their supervisor and RO during their time away. Students with a full award will continue to receive maintenance payments while abroad, provided they have met all their obligations under the AHRC's terms and conditions.

## **Management of the RTSG and reporting/reconciliation requirements**

10. The RTSG is paid quarterly, and will be reconciled at the end of the doctoral grant. The RO's total spend on RTSG must be calculated at the end of each training grant, and any underspend will be reclaimed by the Council.
11. As the RTSG covers several years of the grant, if there is an underspend at the end of any year of the grant the surplus can be used in the subsequent year(s), except for the final year.
12. Beyond the amount provided by the RTSG, the AHRC will not be able to provide any additional funding towards the costs of students' study visit/conference costs.
13. The RTSG will be included in the Funding Assurance Programme (FAP). ROs must have a process in place for monitoring that the funding provided has been spent appropriately.

## **Annex C: Research Councils UK Statement of Expectations for Doctoral Training**

The Research Councils' ambitions are to develop highly-skilled researchers to achieve impact across the whole economy, as well as developing the next generation of researchers to maintain national capability.

Research Councils support doctoral training through a number of mechanisms and the principles set out below apply to all our funded students.<sup>1</sup>

### **Expectations of Research Organisation**

- Research Organisations should implement a training strategy which is in line with the Organisation's research strategy and takes account of Research Councils' strategic objectives.
- The emphasis should be on ensuring the excellence and quality of doctoral training rather than maximising student numbers.
- A robust process should be in place to attract and recruit outstanding quality applicants.

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<sup>1</sup> It is expected that all Research Organisations supporting Research Council funded students abide by the "UK Quality Code for Higher Education" published by the QAA ([The Quality Code](#)).

- Collaboration with Business, Government and Civil Society Organisations is strongly encouraged.
- Research Organisations should report as required to the Research Councils, primarily through the Je-S Studentship Data Portal.<sup>2</sup>
- Students must be aware which organisations fund their doctorate, and how their Research Council funders prioritise, promote and fund research in their field. Research Council support must be acknowledged on any publications or any other form of dissemination arising from their doctoral research.
- Research Organisations should seek to maximise the impact from the outcomes of doctoral training.

### **Expectations of the Training Environment**

- Research Organisations are required to provide excellent standards of supervision, management and mentoring. Supervisors must receive the support and training that they need to provide the highest-quality supervisory support for their students.
- Supervisors (recognising that these may also be teams of supervisors) must recognise doctoral study as a broad training opportunity for a range of careers and encourage and support students in developing their career options.
- Career information should be provided prior to embarking on a doctorate to enable students to choose the most appropriate type of doctorate. Ongoing career advice should be provided during the doctorate to enable students to explore the impact they can have in a wide range of sectors and so manage their careers.
- Research Organisations must have mechanisms to assess, provide for and monitor individual student needs and offer the student appropriate development opportunities.

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<sup>2</sup> Additional reporting may be required for particular schemes; any such bespoke reporting will be described in detail in correspondence between the Research Organisation and the Research Council.

- Students must receive in-depth, advanced research training, as well as developing a broad understanding of their subject area. They should also develop an understanding of the potential impact of their research on society.
- Research Councils expect the provision of professional and transferable skills to form a fundamental part of doctoral training.<sup>3</sup>
- Students must receive training in the principles of good research conduct in their discipline, and understand how to comply with relevant ethical, legal and professional frameworks.<sup>4</sup>
- Students should, wherever possible, benefit from the training and support possibilities offered as a result of being part of a broad peer group.
- Students should be encouraged to consider the broad context of their research area, particularly in reference to societal and ethical issues, and the importance of engaging the public with research. Learning and training opportunities should be provided to help develop their public engagement skills.<sup>5</sup>
- Research organisations are expected to provide an environment where students have the opportunity to widen their horizons as part of their training. Experiences outside the "home" Research Organisation, for example with other academic collaborators, in non-academic environments or overseas are encouraged where it fits with the individual's development needs and the scope of the project. These opportunities should be well planned to ensure the student gains maximum benefit.

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<sup>3</sup> Research Organisations should use the Researcher Development Statement to underpin their professional development programmes for students.

<sup>4</sup> For further information regarding the expectations on Research Organisations, see The Concordat to Support Research Integrity

(<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/TheConcordatToSupportResearchIntegrity.pdf>) and the RCUK Policy and Code of Conduct on the Governance of Good Research Conduct

(<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/Pages/grc.aspx>)

<sup>5</sup> Further information, guidance and advice on public engagement with research can be found on the following websites:

- National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement
- RCUK Public Engagement with Research

## **Expectations of the Students**

- Students should take responsibility for shaping, managing and directing their research project and training, taking advice from their supervisor.
- Students are expected to develop the higher-level capabilities outlined in the Researcher Development Statement.<sup>6</sup>
- Where students have the opportunity to work in a non-academic environment, they should maximise the opportunity by seeking to understand the role of research within the organisation and the wider context.
- Students should recognise their responsibility for developing personal career goals during their doctoral training and consider their possible career options, recognising that these may be outside academe. They should ensure that they are aware of the range of advice available and reflect on their training and development needs to assist in their future employability.

## **Expectations for Collaborations**

- The collaborating organisation and academic partner should undertake to develop a research project of the same challenge as that of a doctoral programme undertaken solely in an academic institution.
- The partners should maximise the quality of the training experience for the student by recognising the broad training and development opportunities which are available through working in academic and non-academic environments.
- Collaborators are encouraged to promote their involvement with both the Research Organisation and Research Council, both internally and externally.

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<sup>6</sup> Further information about the Statement and the associated Researcher Development Framework (including a self-assessment and planning tool for students) is available at the Vitae website.

- Research Councils expect the Research Organisation and collaborating organisation to have an agreement in place before the project begins, which recognises the student's contribution, and ensures that the IP arising from the research and/or training can be managed effectively.

### **Research Councils will**

- Harmonise terms, conditions and guidance around postgraduate training, where practical, whilst recognising there may be valid subject specific reasons for different approaches in some instances.
- Discuss and evaluate postgraduate training approaches at Departmental and Institutional level on visits and through the RCUK Assurance Programme.

## **Research Councils UK Joint Vision For Collaborative Training**

### **Objectives:**

Research Council Collaborative Training will provide doctoral students with a first-rate, challenging research training experience, within the context of a mutually beneficial research collaboration between academic and partner organisations in the private, public and civil society sectors.

**Benefits to the student** – Collaborative Training provides outstanding students with access to training, facilities and expertise not available in an academic setting alone. Students benefit from a diversity of approaches with an applied/translational dimension. Students have an opportunity to develop a range of valuable skills and significantly enhance their future employability; the expectation is that many will become research leaders of the future.

**Benefits to the academic / partner organisations** – Collaborative Training studentships encourage productive engagement between partners who benefit from a motivated, high-quality doctoral student undertaking cutting-edge research relevant to the organisation's priorities and objectives. Collaborative Training provide opportunities to explore novel research collaborations and strengthen current partnerships.

### **Defining an excellent Collaborative Training Studentship:**

**High-quality project** – A challenging, feasible and realistically achievable doctoral project which stimulates excellent research. Through a truly collaborative approach, it provides tangible benefits to all partners.

**High-quality training environment** – Through access to distinctive but complementary environments, partners provide a stimulating framework for research training in the proposed field. Joint supervision gives a unique and broadening perspective on the impact of collaborative research.

**High-quality student experience** – An enriched integrated training experience allows the student to acquire novel skills and expertise. The student gains a wider understanding of how their research may have an impact in wider context that will enhance their future career prospects.