



**Faculty of Humanities Doctoral Academy
ESRC NWSSDTP CASE Studentship
Manchester Guidance
October 2027 Entry**

In addition to the ESRC NWSSDTP CASE Studentship Guidance, the Humanities Doctoral Academy has prepared internal guidance to help you with the relevant parts of the CASE Application. This includes tips for the Expression of Interest and a full CASE application to make your preparation easier.

Full ESRC NWSSDTP CASE guidance can be found on the [NWSSDTP Collaboration page](#)

Project Proposal

The project proposal should ensure evidence of any longstanding collaboration with the CASE partner, provide a track record of outcomes, and integrate the CASE partner into the supervision team. Additionally, where possible, it should be planned for the PGR to be co-located between the University and the CASE partner, including at least one other supervisor from a University affiliated with the NWSSDTP. Please see the Supervisory Arrangements section for further details on the expectations of the supervisory team.

Consideration should be given to whether a 1+3 studentship would be feasible taking into account the structure of the project and the methods that will be employed to ensure that the PGR is equipped to deal with the rigour of the project. The proposal should present a clear research plan valuable to both the University and the CASE partner, as well as detail past and present relationships with CASE partners.

Supervisory Arrangements

In the supervisory arrangements, it is recommended to include a non-academic supervisor from the CASE partner where possible. Furthermore, you should offer additional details regarding past or current working relationships or collaborations between the CASE partner and the supervisory team.

The application should incorporate a contingency plan for supervision to address any potential changes or departures of supervisors during the project. Section 11 of the University [Supervision Policy](#) outlines the procedure for this. At a minimum, a supervisory team should consist of a main and co-supervisor from Manchester, along with any external supervisors from a university affiliated with the NWSSDTP.

Ethics

Ensure to consider potential ethical issues that could arise during the project, such as confidentiality, anonymity, safety of participants and researchers, researcher independence, conflicts of interest, and honesty with participants regarding the research purpose. You should also ensure that you, the PGR (if applicable), and the partner(s) address these concerns collaboratively.

It would help if you addressed any non-academic outputs that are envisioned. Explain how the research results will impact the CASE partner and whether tangible changes are expected. Ensure that the project is feasible for a single PhD student and discuss plans for disseminating the results.

Further information on Manchester's ethical consideration can be found here <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/humanities/research/postgraduate-research/recruitment-and-admissions/admissions/ethics/>

Fit with ESRC Strategy and Priorities

You should prioritise strengthening the relevance of the research question to the ESRC theme. Include detailed explanations within each subsection to illustrate how the research directly supports ESRC priorities.

Non-HEI Partner Organisation Involvement

Along with describing the nature of the proposed interaction with the CASE partner you should also detail past and present relationships with CASE partners and provide examples of previous collaborations. Consider appointing a representative from the CASE partner as a non-academic supervisor for the PhD. Ensure the consistent use of appropriate terminology, such as "CASE study" rather than "evaluation."

Recruitment & Selection Process

Outline a comprehensive recruitment process and explain how a PGR will be recruited. For example, this may include working with the CASE partner to identify the essential and desirable skills to guide the appointment procedure, advertising the project, ensuring all members of the supervisory team have the appropriate training to formally interview and eluding to this.

The Humanities Doctoral Academy Recruitment and Admissions section of the intranet site also houses detailed information on the recruitment process that will be followed for projects where a PGR has not been identified. This can be found here and should be reviewed and summarised in the proposal <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/humanities/research/postgraduate-research/recruitment-and-admissions/advertising-supervisor-led-projects/>.

The following summary outlines the standard process that will be followed to recruit a candidate and should be included in the relevant section of the application for proposals where a candidate has not yet been identified.

A robust and competitive recruitment process will be undertaken to identify the most suitable candidate for this project. The studentship will be advertised on recognised academic platforms, including the Faculty website and FindAPhD, with a clearly defined deadline for applications. Prospective applicants will be encouraged to contact the academic supervisor prior to applying to ensure alignment with the project aims and to discuss their suitability.

The recruitment process will be conducted by the academic supervisory team in collaboration with the CASE Partner, who will be actively involved at each stage. This includes contributing to the development of the advertisement, participating in the shortlisting of applicants, and sitting on the

interview panel. An independent academic representative will also be part of the panel to ensure impartiality and rigour.

Applications will be assessed against clearly defined academic and eligibility criteria. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by the full panel, and all applicants will be notified of the outcome once decisions are finalised. Feedback will be provided to interviewed candidates where appropriate. The process will conclude with the selection of the preferred candidate, completion of necessary documentation, and the issuing of a formal offer through standard institutional procedures. This structured and transparent approach will ensure the appointment of a candidate with the right skills, experience, and potential to deliver the project effectively in both academic and applied settings.

Identified candidate

Based on feedback from successful applicants, if a candidate has already been identified and included in the CASE application, they should be informed to submit a formal programme application. The formal interview and all necessary paperwork should be completed as part of the recruitment process. Approvals will be sought in line with the standard process. This ensures that all recruitment requirements are fully met upfront, removing the need to complete these steps later once outcomes are communicated by the NWSSDTP.