

# NERC Specific DTP Terms and Conditions



NERC reserves the right to alter these terms and conditions over the lifetime of the DTP programme. All DTP award holders will be notified of changes when they occur.

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## Significant alterations

Paragraph	Change
11.	Inclusion of new rules regarding payment of CASE partner financial contribution to the RO, affecting new studentships starting from 2016/17
20.	Addition of clause stating that a Significant Change form must be submitted to notify NERC of any major changes to DTP governance or programme structure
31.	Clarification of funding process for Research Experience Placements (REPs), stating that funds will be paid retrospectively based on itemised costs provided in the post-REP reporting form; subsequent removal of original clause stating that remaining REP funds may be absorbed by the DTP.

## General

- NERC expects each DTP to support the notional number of students awarded to them as the minimum number within each annual student cohort.
- Each notional studentship award consists of (as of 2016/17):
  - Stipend: £58,820
  - Fees: £16,956
  - RTSG: £11,000
  - Management Fee: £1500
- Please note, the figures under Stipend and Fees above will be indexed to

accommodate rises in the RCUK indicative stipend and fees levels over the lifetime of the studentship.

4. The Administrative Lead Partner must confirm acceptance and this notification will be taken as acceptance of the grant under the Terms and Condition of Research Council Training Grants document and associated guidance as well as the conditions contained within the document.
5. NERC expects the DTP partners involved in each DTP to come to an agreement about the transferring of funding. The DTG will not be amended to accommodate these arrangements. The Administrative Lead Partner is responsible for ensuring the agreed funds are transferred to DTP partners. NERC expects all institutions and individuals involved in the delivery of a studentship to place paramount importance on the interests of the students when making decisions about the transfer of funding.
6. DTPs will have flexibility in how they use the funding provided to them via their training grants as long as the minimum number of notional students is supported and the harmonised Training Grant Terms and Conditions are met.
7. Costs associated with the administration of training and delivery of a NERC DTP may be taken from the DTP Training Grant (**TGC5**)
8. The Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) is a contribution towards costs incurred training research students e.g. consumables, equipment, travel, etc. The RTSG is not intended to relieve a Research Organisation of any part of its normal expenditure.
9. Although the RTSG component of each training grant is calculated on the basis of an amount per notional studentship awarded, there is flexibility regarding the amount of RTSG funding any one student can receive. DTPs are able to allocate funding at their discretion across the studentships they are offering taking into account the different funding requirements between projects but must ensure that all students are supported adequately. Research Organisations must ensure that adequate facilities and resources are made available and students must not be expected to cover costs associated with the provision of their research training.

## **CASE Studentships**

10. Each DTP must ensure that, over the lifetime of the DTP, 30% of the total notional studentships awarded to the DTP are CASE (collaborative studentships).
11. The CASE partner(s) must supplement the studentship by a minimum of £1000 p.a. for a minimum of three years. For new studentships starting from 2016/17, this payment should be made to the lead Research Organisation to supplement the RTSG and not paid directly to the student.
12. The CASE partner(s) must host the student for between three and eighteen months during their PhD, during which time they will undertake work outside the academic environment. This placement need not occur in one single period.
13. CASE partners are expected to meet the extra expenses incurred by the student when visiting and working within their establishment.
14. CASE partners are expected to contribute in cash or in kind towards necessary materials and/or facilities not possessed by the Research Organisation concerned that are required by the student to undertake research integral to their CASE studentship.
15. NERC training grant funding cannot be used to meet the CASE partner financial contributions.

## **Governance Structures**

16. Every DTP must have one organisation acting as the Administrative Lead Partner. This is the organisation that will receive the Doctoral Training Grant (DTG) funding from NERC, and will be the main point of contact between NERC and the DTP. The position of Administrative Lead Partner does not confer upon itself the position of the dominant partner that will host the majority of studentships.
17. NERC should be notified in advance of significant management board meetings and NERC reserves the right to attend these meetings as part of its on-going monitoring and strategic engagement activities.
18. Students can start at the DTP at any point in the academic year as long as it is not to the detriment of their training experience at both an individual and cohort level.

## **Reporting**

19. The responsibility for completing the Research Councils' requirements for reporting on students through the Je-S Studentship Details Portal (Je-S SDP) lies with the institution hosting the studentship and not the DTP Administrative Lead Partner.
20. NERC should be notified of any major changes to DTP governance or programme structure by submission of a Significant Change Form electronically to [researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk). This form will be reviewed by at least two members of NERC's Training Advisory Board before a change is approved by NERC.
21. The Administrative Lead Partner of the DTP must submit an annual report to NERC on behalf of the partnership. The annual report will not replace the Research Councils' requirement for reporting through the Je-S SDP nor the need to complete the annual Je-S Submission Survey.
22. This annual report will take the form of a pro forma which must be submitted in late August each year, with the first required 31 August 2015. Information on the exact deadline date for submission will be circulated by NERC in good time ahead of this date for the years after 2015. These reports must be submitted electronically to [researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk) and NOT through Je-S or the RCUK SBS Ltd.
23. DTPs will be required to host formal and informal visits from NERC. Partnerships will be provided with information ahead of these visits in a timely manner by NERC.
24. NERC will undertake a mid-term evaluation of the DTPs in 2016/17. DTPs are required to comply with this evaluation and provide information as requested by NERC. Further information regarding the content and format of this evaluation will be circulated in good time by NERC ahead of this process.
25. NERC fully reserves the right to discuss, adjust or terminate DTP awards based on the information provided as part of the reporting process. Prior to any decision of this nature being taken, NERC will discuss all possible outcomes with representatives from the DTP.

## **Strategic Engagement**

26. As part of its strategic engagement and networking activities, NERC may contact DTP students to inform them of opportunities and activities that may be of interest to them.
27. All personal data held by NERC is stored and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **Research Experience Placements**

28. From 2015 onwards, NERC will allocate funding for Research Experience Placements (REPs) to each DTP award.
29. REPs should be used across the partners included within your DTP and the award of these REPs is at the discretion of each DTP's management group.
30. NERC will monitor the uptake and outcomes of the REPs scheme. Students and Supervisors are required to submit separate post-REP monitoring forms within three months of the completion of the placement. Template forms are available on the NERC website alongside further information regarding REPs, and completed forms should be submitted to [researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk)
31. NERC will award each DTP with funding to support a number of REPs each year and will provide up to £2500 per REP to the DTP Lead Administrative Partner following submission of post-REP monitoring forms, in which all costs are to be itemised. All awards will be cash limited up to this amount.
32. DTPs must support REPs for the minimum time requirement of eight weeks per REP.
33. REPs should be hosted across the range of academic partners at each DTP and not just at the Administrative lead.

## **Forms, FAQs & Guidance**

34. Annual reporting and Significant Change forms, and additional guidance and FAQs regarding the NERC DTPs can be found in the relevant section of the [NERC DTP webpages](#).

## **Contact**

For any queries regarding the NERC DTPs, please contact [researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk)