



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

Studentship Grants

Terms & Conditions and Guidance

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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 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 Arts and Humanities Research Council operates on a UK-wide basis and currently provides funding and support in advanced research; postgraduate research and training; and funding for knowledge transfer activities.

Arts and Humanities Research Council Mission Statement

The Arts and Humanities Research Council has an overarching vision to be a recognised world-leader in advancing arts and humanities research through 4 strategic aims:

- To promote and support the production of world-class research in the arts and humanities
- To promote and support world-class postgraduate training designed to equip graduates for research or other professional careers.
- To strengthen the impact of arts and humanities research by encouraging researchers to disseminate and transfer knowledge to other contexts where it will make a difference.
- To raise the profile of arts and humanities research and to be an effective advocate for its social, cultural and economic significance.

Research Councils' Equal Opportunities Statement

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.

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.

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.

Changes to the administration of studentships

Creation of a Research Council Shared Service Centre (SSC)

The Research Councils have established a Shared Services Centre (SSC), known as RCUK SSC Ltd, which will take over many of the AHRC's current functions in grants administration and finance. This will mean changes in how students, supervisors and other staff in Research Organisations contact or interact with the AHRC in relation to the administration of awards and studentships. Some of these changes have already taken place, but this is an ongoing process and further developments will be communicated at the appropriate time.

The AHRC and the SSC are committed to providing an accessible, high quality, efficient and accurate service in all their interactions with the community and will endeavour to make this transfer as seamless as possible and to keep everyone informed of impending changes in a timely and effective manner as information becomes available.

Introduction of Je-S Student Details Portal for AHRC

During the academic year 2010-11, the AHRC will begin using the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP). All records relating to AHRC-funded students will then be managed by Research Organisations within the Je-S Student Details Portal. Details of current students will be set up on the SDP when the new Studentship Grants are set up.

Once the SDP is available for use on AHRC studentship data, Research Organisations will be able to use the SDP to update information about their students throughout the duration of their grant, for example if a student were to suspend their studentship. The Council will no longer be making adjustments to individual studentships within grants, and will cease to deal with individual student issues.

As a result, the AHRC will no longer be using a nominations process to recruit students to BGPs, CDAs, or Project Studentships. Instead of submitting nominations to the Council, Research Organisations will enter details of their AHRC-funded students into the SDP. Students recruited to places on any AHRC-funded grant must meet our published eligibility criteria.

Although Research Organisations will have to input details of suspensions (and, for example, record changes to studentships such as periods of illness) into the SDP, the AHRC will no longer require Research Organisations to inform us of these directly to request approval. This should give Research Organisations more autonomy to approve changes to individual studentships within grants.

Introduction

The Studentship Grants are a new way for AHRC to make studentship payments to Research Organisations. Instead of receiving individual payments relating to specific students, Research Organisations will receive aggregated grants: blocks of funding each year covering students' maintenance, tuition fees, etc.

The system will allow us to introduce a more flexible approach with more autonomy for Research Organisations managing their AHRC postgraduate funding, and will align the AHRC's administrative procedures more closely with those of the other Research Councils.

The AHRC aims to provide support to the Research Organisation to enable them to support their students effectively in their academic work. Should the RO need to enquire about a Studentship Grant, they should contact the RCUK SSC.

The AHRC intends that the studentships provided will enable the successful pursuit of postgraduate studies. This guide is intended to help supervisors and other university staff to understand our expectations regarding the administration of studentships, the payments we make in respect of those studentships to Research Organisations, and how we monitor progress, and the terms and conditions that are attached to grants and studentships.

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, or Research Grants.

This guide includes a section on research training which explains the AHRC 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.

For students in receipt of a studentship under the Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme (CDA) or a collaborative research studentship in one of our strategic research programmes the information in this guide applies to them but they should also see the section which contains additional information about the operation of collaborative studentships.

Section 2: Terms and Conditions

The section below sets out the formal terms and conditions that relate to all studentships funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). This includes those awarded under the Block Grant Partnership Scheme (BGP), Studentship Competition, Collaborative Doctoral Awards Scheme (CDA), Project Studentships, historic Open Competitions, 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 such students and relevant staff at Research Organisations.

Validity and scope of this guide

This guide applies to all postgraduate studentships supported by funding from the AHRC.

This guide is valid from 1st October 2010 and supersedes all previous versions. The Guide replaces the Studentship Terms and Conditions, and the Guide for Award Holders.

General responsibilities

The Research Organisation holding the Studentship Grant and those involved in the supervision of students are expected to 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.

The Research Organisation holding the Studentship Grant is expected to ensure proper financial management of any funding awarded by the AHRC, and accountability for the use of public funds, 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.

The Research Organisation holding the Studentship Grant will pay monies due to students 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. Further, the Research Organisation should not pay maintenance due to an AHRC-funded student in arrears; the Research Organisation should pay the total sum of the maintenance for that quarter in advance, in accordance with the student's entitlement.

All students nominated for or supported by an AHRC studentship must comply with the academic and residency eligibility criteria set out in AHRC guidance documents relating to its postgraduate funding schemes.

The Research Organisation will be surveyed on an annual basis against the AHRC's submission rate threshold. Doctoral students supported by funding from the AHRC will be expected to submit a thesis within four years of the start of their studentship if they are studying full-time, and within seven years if they are studying part-time. Research Organisations will face sanctions by the AHRC if submission thresholds are not met.

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.

In accepting their studentship or submitting their nomination, students are authorising their Research Organisation to disclose to the AHRC any information that the AHRC requests regarding the progress of their studies and the submission of their thesis (where appropriate). They are authorising the Research Organisation to provide any such information requested on the AHRC's or Councils' behalf to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) or any other organisation¹ 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 beyond the life of their studentship for evaluation purposes.

The AHRC (or the SSC acting on its behalf) will treat as confidential all information held on a student regarding their personal details and will not pass any information to a third party, except to the authorities of the Research Organisation where the student is studying. The AHRC will not, therefore, be able to provide references or information regarding a student or their studentship to a third party, even in cases where the request is made by the holder of the studentship.

The Research Organisation must complete and return any other reports relating to studentships held as may be required by the AHRC from time to time.

Registration

All students supported by funding from the AHRC must be registered as a full-time, part-time or distance-learning student (as appropriate to their studentship) for the course or programme of study, at the UK Research Organisation and for the time specified in the AHRC's offer notification or approved nomination. It is not possible for doctoral students to study by distance learning.

If a student's registration ceases for any reason (other than an approved temporary suspension of study) the studentship must be terminated.

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

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

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.

For doctoral students, if a student is initially registered as a probationary or prospective doctoral research student, it is a condition of their studentship that they are registered as a doctoral research student by the beginning of the final year of their studentship. If a student does not upgrade accordingly, the studentship will normally be terminated.

¹ 'Organisation' should be taken to mean any agency empowered to act on the AHRC's behalf or on behalf of the Research Councils, including RCUK SSC Ltd

For studentships held under the Research Preparation Master's and Professional Preparation Master's schemes, the student must not upgrade to doctoral status during the tenure of their studentship, but may apply separately for doctoral funding.

Tenure of the studentship

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. Distance-learning students must still reside in the UK, even if they live at a distance from their RO.

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.

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 Collaborative Doctoral Award 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.

The length of a studentship will be stated in the student's offer notification, or in the nomination confirmation.

Continuation of all studentships is subject to the student's satisfactory annual progress, and we expect the RO to have appropriate mechanisms in place to monitor this.

Satisfactory progress includes gaining a Master's level qualification and/or upgrading to doctoral status, as applicable for that student.

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.

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, a request to transfer to another Research Organisation), the student must inform their Research Organisation, who should take action appropriate to that particular circumstance, as specified in this Guide.

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.

Funding for students must cease after their agreed duration. Funding for doctoral full-time studentships is for no longer than three years, and doctoral part-time five years, unless there has been prior agreement with the AHRC for extended funding.

The AHRC will not intervene in any disputes between a student and a Research Organisation.

Levels of support

The values of the Studentship Grants are derived from the value of funding allocated to particular studentships. As such, Research Organisations 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).

Research Organisations must support students according to the stipend and other rates, published annually by the AHRC.

Paid work

Although it is not encouraged by the AHRC, 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 Research Organisation agrees the commitment. A studentship must be terminated if the holder of a full-time studentship also holds a full-time job at the same time, or a part-time job that is incompatible with the time required for a student to undertake full-time study.

Teaching and demonstrating

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 year
- the total demand on their time does not exceed six hours in any week
- the work is compatible with their programme of doctoral study
- their supervisor approves.

Any teaching or demonstrating work should be paid for at the usual hourly rate applicable in the Research Organisation 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.

Employment in a Research Organisation

If a prospective student is a member of staff employed at the RO at which they wish to study, if they hold a full-time or part-time salaried position they are not eligible to hold an AHRC studentship at that RO. If they are paid on an hourly basis, they may be eligible for a part-time studentship.

If the holder of an AHRC studentship takes up a salaried position at the Research Organisation where they are studying they are no longer eligible for AHRC funding, even for part-time study, and the RO must terminate the studentship. If it is a short-term appointment it may be possible to suspend the studentship for the relevant period.

Taking up paid employment before the end of a studentship

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.

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.

Reporting

Students must complete and return any reports, for example, a Final Report at the end of the period of funding, and others as may be required by the AHRC from time to time, in order to monitor the progress of the studentship.

Other awards

Students must inform their RO immediately if they receive or are applying for a grant or an award from another body 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.

Health and Safety

The Research Organisation 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 Research Organisation must satisfy itself that all reasonable health and safety requirements are addressed. The Research Councils reserve the right to require the Research Organisation 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

The Research Organisation is required to have in place procedures for governing good research practice that meet the requirements of the Research Councils guidance on good practice. The Research Organisation must ensure that there are reliable systems and processes in place for the prevention of research misconduct, e.g. plagiarism, falsification of data, together with well-defined and clearly publicised arrangements for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct. Where an allegation of misconduct arises in respect of a student supported by funding from the AHRC, the Research Organisation must inform the AHRC immediately and notify the AHRC of the outcome of any investigation. The Research Organisation must ensure that potential conflicts of interest in research are declared and subsequently managed.

Research Governance

It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to ensure that the work supported through AHRC-funded studentships 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. Particular requirements are to ensure that all necessary permissions are obtained before the project begins. The AHRC and the other Research

Councils expect all research to be conducted in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, research governance and research methodology.

Research Ethics

The Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that any ethical issues relating to the research supported through a studentship funded by the AHRC 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.

Record maintenance

All students must ensure that their Je-S account is kept up to date with any changes in contact details.

Research Organisations must keep all information relating to their grants and included studentships updated in the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP) in a timely and accurate fashion.

Data Protection Regulations

Where relevant, the AHRC will use information provided on the application form for processing the proposal, the award of any consequential grant, and for the payment, maintenance and review of the grant. It will do so in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and associated guidelines or codes of practice.

To meet the Research Councils' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations, and for public accountability and the dissemination of information, details of grants may also be made available on the Research Councils' web sites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists.

The AHRC and, from a date to be decided, RCUK SSC Ltd (the SSC) acting on behalf of the AHRC, will retain information relating to an application or a nomination and the studentship both electronically and in paper form. Personal information is used to process and monitor a studentship (including both academic and financial monitoring).

This includes:

- operation of the AHRC/SSC 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.

The AHRC/SSC 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/SSC will pass students' contact details on to two schemes funded by the AHRC and Research Councils – the Vitae Programme (formerly UKGrad) and the Researchers in Residence Scheme – in order that they can keep students informed of the opportunities they offer.

The AHRC/SSC 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.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The AHRC is a public authority for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and is subject to its 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 exemptions that are specified in the Act. These exemptions apply to, among other things:

- personal information;
- information that has been provided in confidence; or
- information which is a trade secret or where its release would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person.

The AHRC sometimes receives requests, made under the Act, for information contained in applications, proposals, or award progress reports. 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. The AHRC has a duty to comply with the FOI Act and is obliged to disclose any information requested, unless specific exemptions apply.

Details of studentships may be published on the AHRC website and in other AHRC publications. If a student does not wish their details to be made public, they should contact AHRC Programmes to request privacy.

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.

Research Councils have an obligation to respond to specific requests and may be required to disclose information about or provided by Research Organisations. In some cases the Research Council may consult the Research Organisation before disclosure, but it is under no obligation to do so. If a Research Organisation 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.

Where a Research Council determines that a Research Organisation is holding information on its behalf that it requires in order to comply with its obligations under FOIA or EIRs, the Research Organisation 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.

In some cases Research Organisations 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 Research Organisations.

The AHRC/SSC will not be able to 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.

Publication and Dissemination of Research

It is AHRC policy that the results of the research it supports should be disseminated as widely as possible, for the benefit of other researchers and of the wider community. Research Organisations 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. 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.

Publication of any aspect of the research resulting from an AHRC-funded studentship, through publications and other forms of media communication, including media appearances, press releases and conferences, must acknowledge the support received from the AHRC.

Guidelines on AHRC branding for publications, publishing and marketing materials are available by contacting AHRC Communications.

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.

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 if asked to do so.

Exploitation and Intellectual Property Rights

If any postgraduate training is likely to produce results or products that might be commercially exploited, it is important to ensure that any potential benefits can be realised. Research Organisations 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 Research Organisations 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 Research Organisation.

The AHRC would also encourage students and their supervisors 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.

Complaints and Appeals

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/policies/complaintsandappeals/>

Disclaimer and liability

The Research Councils accept 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 Research Organisation is responsible in all respects for any research undertaken and its consequences.

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.

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.

These terms and conditions together with any additional conditions set out in the offer of award or studentship contain the whole agreement between the Research Council and the Research Organisation in relation to the stated award or studentship. The Research Council and the Research Organisation do not intend that any of these terms and conditions should be enforceable by any third party.

Section 3: Postgraduate Competitions and Schemes

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

Block Grant Partnerships (BGPs)

The Block Grant Partnership competition awards a certain number of doctoral, Research Preparation Master's and Professional Preparation Master's studentships to a Research Organisation (RO), allocated by subject and by academic year. The RO nominates eligible students to take up the studentships awarded.

Studentship Competition (SC)

The Studentship Competition is open to students at eligible Research Organisations which do not hold BGP awards. Doctoral, Research Preparation Master's and Professional Preparation Master's studentships are offered in this scheme.

Open Competition

Prior to the implementation of the Block Grant Partnerships and Studentship Competition, the AHRC operated an annual competition for studentships.

Within these three competitions, studentships will have been awarded under one of the following schemes:

Research Preparation Master's Scheme (RPM)

The Research Preparation Master's 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)

The Professional Preparation Master's 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

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 Collaborative Doctoral Awards competition aims to encourage, promote and develop collaboration between Research Organisation (i.e. a higher education institution) 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.

Project Studentships attached to Research Grants

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 costings support for up to two doctoral students, depending on the scheme, whose work will be closely related to the research project.

Applications for CDAs and Project Studentships are made by a department in a Research Organisation, 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.

Continuing Students

For continuing students who have previously received a studentship in the Doctoral Awards scheme, the Research Preparation Master's scheme, the Professional Preparation Master's scheme, or Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme, their award will become part of a Studentship Grant. For students that hold a project studentship, their award will be incorporated into the Research Grant. The information in this guide applies for the 2010-11 academic year and supersedes all previous terms and conditions and guidance.

Section 4: Scope of Studentship Grants

Types of studentship covered

All the above AHRC postgraduate studentship types, with the exception of Project Students attached to Research Grants, will be provided to ROs as the new Studentship Grants. This includes Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs), and studentships provided through the Open Competition, the Studentship Competition, and the Block Grant Partnerships. The new grants will also be used for continuing students, irrespective of the type of studentship or the scheme or competition under which they were awarded.

Project Studentships (doctoral students attached to Research Grants) will not be offered as separate grants. Instead, each student's parent Research Grant will be supplemented to the value of their studentship.

Duration of Studentship Grants

For doctoral Studentship Grants for continuing students, each grant's start date will be 1st October 2010, and its end date will be equal to the latest AHRC funding end date of a student included in the grant plus an additional 12 months.

(For example, if a BGP grant has three doctoral students with end dates of 30th September 2011, 30th September 2012, and 30th September 2013, the end date of that grant will be 30th September 2014.)

For Master's Studentship Grants for continuing students, each grant's start date will be 1st October 2010, and its end date will be equal to the latest AHRC funding end date of a student included in the grant, unless otherwise stated.

For doctoral Studentship Grants for students starting in 2010-11 offered in 2010-11, each grant's start date will be that of the earliest starting student, and its end date will be equal to the latest AHRC funding end date of a student included in the grant plus 12 months.

For Master's Studentship Grants for students starting in 2010-11 offered in 2010-11, each grant's start date will be that of the earliest starting student, and its end date will be equal to the latest AHRC funding end date of a student included in the grant, unless otherwise stated.

It is possible that your Research Organisation's portfolio of studentship grants will not all have the same end date.

The constituent studentships covered within each Studentship Grant were originally offered by the AHRC to students for specific durations of study. Research Organisations 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. Once the Student Details Portal is available, this will include details of a student's duration. Please contact the AHRC if you require details of a student's duration before the SDP is available.

From October 2011, studentship grants will be offered for standard durations. These durations will be detailed in the 2011-12 Studentship Grants terms and conditions.

Types of Studentship Grant

Each Research Organisation with AHRC studentships will be offered one or more of the following grant types, based on the profile of students held at that Research Organisation.

Block Grant Partnerships

- BGP Parent Grant

This grant does not include any funds and will not have students linked to it, but will be used for reporting at the level of the entire BGP. There will be one grant to cover the entire duration of the BGP. This grant will already have been offered to (and accepted by) Research Organisations which currently hold a Block Grant Partnership.

- BGP Doctoral Continuers Grant

This grant will include BGP doctoral students whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.

- BGP Doctoral 2010 Grant

This grant will include BGP doctoral students whose AHRC funding begins during the academic year 2010-11.

- BGP PPM Continuers Grant

This grant will include BGP Professional Preparation Master's students whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.

- BGP PPM 2010 Grant

This grant will include BGP Professional Preparation Master's students whose AHRC funding begins during the academic year 2010-11.

- BGP RPM Continuers Grant

This grant will include BGP Research Preparation Master's students whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.

- BGP RPM 2010 Grant

This grant will include BGP Research Preparation Master's students whose AHRC funding begins during the academic year 2010-11.

Open and Studentships Competitions

- Competition Doctoral Continuers Grant

This grant will include students that 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.

- Competition Doctoral 2010 Grant

This grant will include students that gained AHRC funding in the Doctoral Scheme, through the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding begins during the academic year 2010-11.

- Competition PPM Continuers Grant

This grant will include students that gained AHRC funding in the Professional Preparation Master's Scheme, through the former Open competition or the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.

- Competition PPM 2010 Grant

This grant will include students that gained AHRC funding in the Professional Preparation Master's Scheme, through the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding begins during the academic year 2010-11.

- Competition RPM Continuers Grant

This grant will include students that gained AHRC funding in the Research Preparation Master's Scheme, through the former Open competition or the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding began before the academic year 2010-11.

- Competition RPM 2010 Grant

This grant will include students that gained AHRC funding in the Research Preparation Master's Scheme, through the Studentship Competition, whose AHRC funding begins during the academic year 2010-11.

CDAs

- Collaborative Doctoral Grant

There will be one grant per Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA), although each CDA may consist of multiple studentships.

- Beyond Text CDAs

There will be one grant per Beyond Text Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA), although each CDA may consist of multiple studentships.

- Religion and Society CDAs

There will be one grant per Religion and Society Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA), although each CDA may consist of multiple studentships.

- Science and Heritage CDAs

There will be one grant per Science and Heritage Doctoral Award (CDA), although each CDA may consist of multiple studentships.

Section 5: Additional Funding Opportunities for Studentship Award Holders

The following schemes and opportunities are available to those holding AHRC studentships:

Library of Congress Scheme (LoC)

This scheme, funded in collaboration with ESRC and the American Library of Congress, provides doctoral students with opportunities to travel to Washington DC to work for between 3 and 6 months in the Library of Congress, with access to the internationally renowned research collections held there. In addition to any stipend granted in conjunction with the studentship, the LoC Scheme offers an additional £1000 a month towards living costs and £500 towards flight costs.

National Institute of the Humanities (Japan) Scheme (NIHU)

This scheme provides doctoral students with opportunities to travel to Japan to work for between 3 and 6 months at one of NIHU's 5 research centres, with access to the internationally renowned research collections held there. The Institute houses world-class facilities and holdings focussing on cultural studies and the humanities. In addition to any stipend granted in conjunction with the studentship, the NIHU scheme offers an additional £1000 a month towards living costs and £800 flight costs.

Collaborative Research Training: Student-led Initiatives

This scheme supports the establishment of innovative collaborative research training programmes, originated by and run for postgraduate doctoral students that have a subject – or discipline – specific focus. Training is welcome which has as broad or as narrow a subject focus as is appropriate for the particular field. The Student-Led Initiative provides awards of up to £2000 towards the costs of setting up a training project, activity or event.

Section 6: Post-Award Processes

From 1st October 2010, the AHRC will no longer be administering most post-award processes (with the exception of DSA). Instead, ROs will have the authority to make decisions about many post-award processes without the need to have these confirmed/signed-off by the AHRC.

Where an RO requires additional clarification to make a decision on a post-award process, appropriate registry or finance office staff should contact the SSC directly. The Council will not be able to handle enquiries from students about post-award decisions, and students should direct all queries to the relevant authority at their Research Organisation.

The AHRC will not intervene in any dispute between and RO and a student where it is clear that these terms and conditions (and any related guidelines) have been followed.

Termination or lapse of studies

Research Organisations 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.

The AHRC reserves the right to reclaim funding during the reconciliation process for any studentship where a student or their Research Organisation 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.

If a student discontinues or terminates their studies, the Research Organisation must terminate that studentship as per the standard Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP) process.

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.

Failure to upgrade to doctoral status

If a doctoral student fails to upgrade to doctoral status by the beginning of the final year of their studentship (for example, if they remain registered as an MPhil student), the studentship must be terminated from the end of its penultimate year.

Replacement of terminated students

On the following grant types, students that terminate their studies before the end of their funding may be replaced:

- BGP Doctoral Continuers grant
- BGP Doctoral 2010 grant

- BGP PPM Continuers grant
- BGP PPM 2010 grant
- BGP RPM Continuers grant
- BGP RPM 2010 grant
- Collaborative Doctoral Awards
- Beyond Text CDAs
- Religion and Society CDAs
- Science and Heritage CDAs

Students whose funding was obtained through the Open Competition or Studentship Competition may not be replaced. 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 nominations process.

Any replacement students must be recruited in a fair and transparent process, in line with the *Guide to Student Recruitment and Nomination*, which is available here: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/guides/ahrc-postgraduate-studentships-recruitment-and-nomination/>

Replacement students should be funded alongside the other students on the grant, using the funds remaining after the previous student has terminated their studies.

Where the cost of a replacement student exceeds the fund remaining (e.g. where a student that qualifies for a full award replaces a fees-only student), the AHRC will not be able to provide any additional funding and funds must be found from elsewhere.

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 AHRC will seek reimbursement during the reconciliation process.

When selecting a replacement student, the RO must work within the duration of the Studentship Grant.

The replacement student must be able to achieve an appropriate qualification by the end of their AHRC funding (and writing up period, where applicable).

Replacement students on a grant must be within the same scheme as the student they replace, i.e. a Professional Preparation Master's student must be replaced with another Professional Preparation Master's student.

Replacement students on BGP grants must be within the same subject area (as designated by the BGP award) as the student they replace, i.e. a student on a BGP Creative Writing studentship must be replaced by a Creative Writing studentship.

Replacement students do not need to be studying in the same department as the student they replace.

Where a student terminates their studies and is not replaced, the AHRC will seek reimbursement of any unspent funds during the reconciliation process.

Transfer of a studentship to another course or Research Organisation

Studentships are awarded for a particular course or programme of study at a particular Research Organisation as identified on the student's application or nomination form and approved by the AHRC. As such, Research Organisations 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 Research Organisation.

The receiving Research Organisation will be required to accept all the terms and conditions relating to the studentship as it was made, including its start date and length, registration requirements and (in the case of a doctoral student) submission date.

Research Organisations must not agree a transfer to a course or programme of study that falls outside the AHRC's subject domain. If the Research Organisation is unsure whether this is the case, they should contact the AHRC.

Research Organisations must not agree a doctoral student's transfer to a Research Organisation or department that was ineligible to submit applications for doctoral awards at the time of the student's application or nomination.

The receiving and releasing Research Organisations must agree arrangements for the transfer of funding from the releasing to the receiving RO, as the Studentship Grant at the releasing RO will contain the required funding for the remainder of the studentship and the AHRC will not transfer these funds to the receiving RO.

The receiving and releasing Research Organisations must also agree arrangements for any repayments or reimbursement (should these apply), as the studentship's funding will be reconciled against the releasing Research Organisation's grant.

If the transferring student is the only one on a particular grant, the entire grant and any remaining funds must be transferred to the receiving institution. In this situation both Research Organisations should contact the AHRC to arrange for a transfer of the grant to the receiving Research Organisation.

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

In undertaking a doctoral or Master's research project, 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 Research Organisation should enter changes of thesis title into the Je-S Student Details Portal as soon as possible.

If a student is considering a major change of topic or direction, the Research Organisation should only approve this in exceptional circumstances.

The Research Organisation should ensure that any change is supported by statements from the course leader, tutor or head of department.

Research Organisations 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

area for that studentship. If the Research Organisation is unsure whether this is the case, they should contact the AHRC.

Students must gain the same level qualification as that specified in the original application or nomination form.

Master's students supported through a BGP award are restricted in possible course changes. These students should refer to paragraph 61 of the *Guide for Block Grant Partnership Award Holders* and contact their Research Organisation's BGP Coordinator.

Changing department or supervisor

If a student changes their supervisor or the department in which they are studying, the Research Organisation should update these details into the Je-S Student Details Portal as soon as possible.

Research Organisations 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

Research Organisations may approve a change of the mode of study of a studentship from part-time to full-time or vice-versa.

The AHRC recommends that, where possible, changes of mode of study should take effect from the beginning of a quarter (i.e. 1st October, 1st January, 1st April or 1st July) as this makes the calculation, payment, and reconciliation of students' funding more straightforward.

Possible reasons for a change of mode of study may include changes in a student's personal or employment circumstances.

Research Organisations 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.

Research Organisations should normally only permit one change of mode of study during any one studentship.

Research Organisations should not normally agree a change of mode of study in the final six months of a studentship.

Research Organisations must not agree a change of mode of study in the studentship's writing-up period.

Research Organisations should calculate the remaining length of the studentship on the basis of funding already received; 12 months' full-time study should be treated as equivalent to 20 months' part-time study, and vice-versa.

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. Research Organisations will need to input this information into the SDP.

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. Research Organisations will need to input this information into the SDP.

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

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 14th February 2010 could receive maintenance payments up to 31st March 2010), but they must not receive any further payments.

The studentship should be terminated from the end of the quarter.

A studentship terminated for reasons of early submission must not be replaced.

Where an overpayment occurs as a result of early submission, the AHRC will seek reimbursement during the reconciliation process.

Suspension of a studentship

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 following reasons.

Temporary periods of suspension

The Research Organisation may approve a suspension of a studentship for reasons of illness, personal circumstances, or if a student gains temporary employment or a scholarship.

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. Once a studentship has finished and the student is in their 'writing-up' year, the AHRC will not consider a request to extend the submission deadline for a student on the grounds that they have taken up employment.

During any period of suspension students are not entitled to receive AHRC funding. The Research Organisation may require the student to repay the amount that has been overpaid. A student should repay any amounts owing to their Research Organisation.

The end date of a student's AHRC funding should normally be extended by the length of the suspension.

Periods of suspension should 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.

Research Organisations should consider suspensions for studentships in the Master's schemes carefully, because if such a studentship were to be suspended, the student may have difficulty completing their course on time. Research Organisations 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.

The Research Organisation must enter the details of any approved suspensions in the Je-S Student Details Portal within one month of the suspension being approved.

If the suspension takes the student beyond the end date of the grant, the RO can 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 a student is unable to resume their studies after a period of suspension the Research Organisation will be expected to repay any funds that have been overpaid during reconciliation.

Short-term illness

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 Research Organisation immediately and provide them with a medical certificate.

Payment of a studentship can continue for absences covered by a medical certificate for up to thirteen weeks within any 12-month period.

If the illness lasts, or is expected to last, for more than thirteen weeks, the student and Research Organisation should make arrangements to suspend the studentship following the guidance above.

If a student is unable to resume their studies after a period of illness the Research Organisation will be expected to repay any funds that have been overpaid after the thirteen-week period during reconciliation.

Maternity leave

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.

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.

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.

There is no limit to the number of periods of maternity leave that can be taken during a studentship.

Paternity leave

Students are entitled to a total of two weeks' (10 days') paternity leave, to be taken at any time during their partner's pregnancy or within three months following the birth. Funding can be provided during this period. This period is regarded as additional leave of absence from their studies and studentships will not be extended. If further time is needed the studentship should be suspended.

Adoption Leave

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 will 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.

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.

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 7: Financial value of Grants

This section provides guidance regarding the financial management of the Studentship Grants.

Fund headings and payment profiles within grants

Each grant which contains payments will contain one or more of the following fund headings, depending on the studentships contained within the grant. (For example, a grant supporting students who are only eligible for fees-only funding would not contain the 'Student Stipend' heading.)

Student Stipend

This fund heading will contain funds to cover students' maintenance payments for the duration of the grant (the former 'Basic Maintenance' category).

Where the grant is for CDA studentships, where applicable this fund heading will also contain the additional CDA maintenance payment (the former 'CDA Maintenance' category).

The payments will be profiled 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).

Fees

This fund heading will contain funds to cover students' tuition fee payments for the duration of the grant (the former 'Tuition Fees' category).

For grants at Oxford and Cambridge, this heading will also contain College fee payments for the duration of the grant (the former 'College Fees' category).

The payments for each year will be profiled according to the duration of the studentships included in the grant (i.e. the total payments may decrease in later years as students on the grant reach their AHRC funding end date).

The payments for each year will be profiled into four equal, quarterly payments.

RTSG

This fund heading will contain funds to cover the Research Training Support Grant for the duration of the grant. This is a new fund heading, and should be used for the purposes outlined in the Guidelines for use of the Research Training Support Grant available here: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/guides/rtsg-guidelines/>

Where applicable, this heading will also contain any funds for 2010-11 allocated under the former UK Travel, Overseas Study Visit, or Overseas Conference payment categories approved by the AHRC. We will provide a list of these payments and the students to which they relate when the grant is offered.

The payments for each year will be profiled into four equal, quarterly payments.

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).

Additional DSA claims can be made using the process described in below.

Roberts

This fund heading will contain funds to cover the Research Training Funding for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 academic years (the former 'RTF' category).

The payments for each year will be profiled into four equal, quarterly payments.

The value of a studentship

Postgraduate studentship rates and allowances are reviewed each year.

The AHRC does not expect any student eligible for a full award to receive less than the published rate.

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.

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.

All payments on the grant are made to the Research Organisation at which the student is registered. The AHRC is not able to make payments directly to students.

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 actual study on the particular course of study or research may have commenced.

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.

Funding for skills training (doctoral studentships only)

AHRC makes an additional payment to Research Organisations, 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 use this money 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, as appropriate.

Income tax and National Insurance

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

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.

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 Research Organisation 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.

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 for study abroad for one year, the AHRC studentship should be suspended for that period.

Additional allowances

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)

Students who have a long-term disability and as a result of that disability 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 taking up a studentship to pursue postgraduate study. The allowance is available to all AHRC-funded students, full-time, part-time and fees-only.

Students wishing to apply for DSA should contact the Disability Coordinator at the Research Organisation in which they are studying as soon as possible as this will ensure that they will have access to the best and most appropriate support throughout their study. In most cases a student will be asked to undertake a needs assessment at a recognised Assessment Centre and if the disability coordinator considers such an assessment to be necessary the AHRC will normally cover the cost. Details of Assessment Centres can be found here:
www.nnac.org

The Research Councils do not have set rates for DSA but for guidance please refer to the following:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EducationAndTraining/HigherEducation/DG_070188

Disabled Students Allowance payments will be added as a separate funding stream to the appropriate Studentship Grant, and will be reconciled at the end of the grant during the reconciliation process. As such, the Research Organisation should retain invoices or receipts as proof of expenditure for equipment and non-medical helper costs.

Study visit and conference funding

The AHRC no longer accepts applications for funding for study visits, fieldwork, or conference attendance. Instead, we provide a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) fund heading within each doctoral Studentship Grants to cover this.

The 'Guidelines for use of the Research Training Support Grant' contains further details about the value, eligibility, rules, and recommendations regarding the RTSG. The Guidelines can be found here:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/guides/rtsg-guidelines/>

Section 8: Monitoring

Student progress

Annual progress reporting

The AHRC will no longer ask the Research Organisation to confirm the progress of students at the end of each academic year. However, we encourage Research Organisations to ensure that student progress is satisfactory and that students have met the relevant terms and conditions. Examples of things Research Organisations 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

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.

Difficulties encountered during the course of study

It is important that students and their supervisors inform the relevant authorities at the Research Organisation about any circumstances that may significantly affect their 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.

End of award reports

All AHRC-funded students will be required to submit, by the end of their studentship, a report on the work they have undertaken together with an assessment from their supervisor or course leader.

For doctoral studentships information will be requested about the training they have received, the skills they have acquired and an assessment of the support they have received.

For Master's studentships information will be requested about the course and the training they have received and their plans once the studentship has finished.

The report forms will be available in electronic format on the AHRC website and an e-mail notification will be sent to students and Research Organisations in early summer when they are available for download. Forms should be returned to the AHRC by the end of September.

Completion of Master's or Diploma courses

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. Research Organisations 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 Research Organisations.

Submission Rate Monitoring

Doctoral submission rates

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 research organisation.

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 four years after taking up the studentship if they have a full-time studentship, or no later than seven 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 currently calculated in terms of years after the start of a studentship, not after the start of the doctoral research (which may have preceded the gaining of an AHRC studentship).

The Research Organisation may require a different submission date to that specified by the AHRC and students should check this with them.

The AHRC informed students at the start of their studentship what the expected AHRC submission date is and will also have informed them of any changes to this date as a result of any suspensions or extensions granted on a studentship. From 1st October 2010, the AHRC will not inform students of any changes to their submission date resulting from suspensions or submission date extensions, as this will be the responsibility of Research Organisations.

When the Research Organisation alters a submission date on the Student Details Portal, they will have to add a reason for the change which will be monitored as part of the submission rate survey.

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

Each year, the AHRC collects information from Research Organisations 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 Research Organisations in meeting the targets set for the successful submission and completion of theses by the students that the AHRC funds. Sanctions are applied at an organisational level only.

If a student is allowed to transfer their studentship to another Research Organisation, that receiving organisation takes on the responsibility for ensuring that the original submission target date is met, but such students will be included in the submission rate survey for the original Research Organisation. Please note that if a studentship is transferred to another Research Organisation after their studentship has ended, i.e. during the writing up period, that student's submission will count for the Research Organisation that was originally awarded the studentship rather than the new Research Organisation.

Although the Research Organisation now has the authority to decide on many areas of grant management (e.g. suspensions), the AHRC retains authority for managing submission rate extension requests as this must be done consistently across all ROs in order for submission rate data to be accurate.

Extensions to submission dates

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.

While the AHRC will normally extend a submission date to take account of any period of suspension notified during a studentship, only in exceptional circumstances will we consider extending the target date for submission on account of difficulties that arise during the writing up period. Such difficulties may relate to illness, accident, exceptional personal circumstances or maternity. The student's research organisation will be required to submit documentation to support such a case.

Extensions to submission date must not be approved for a student who has taken up employment of any kind during their writing up year.

Extensions to submission date should not be approved retrospectively where the Research Organisation 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 should not be approved for periods of illness if appropriate medical certificates were not submitted to the RO at the time.

Students and supervisors should keep the relevant authorities in their Research Organisation informed at the time of any circumstance that may adversely affect a student's ability to submit their doctoral work on time.

Exclusion from submission rate surveys

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.

Students that have died before submission are omitted from calculations of submission rates.

First employment destinations

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 Research Organisations 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 would ask students to co-operate by keeping their Research Organisation informed about their employment. The AHRC also participates in wider surveys and studies of the career paths of funded students. Again, the Council would ask for co-operation in such surveys.

Section 9: AHRC's Framework of Research Training Requirements

Research Training Framework

The framework of research training requirements implemented in 2004 by the AHRC's predecessor body (AHRB) was developed as a means of enabling Research Organisations 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.

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.

Researcher Development Statement

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/CMS/files/upload/Researcher%20Development%20Statement_RDS%20July%202010.pdf

Vitae and Research Councils' Graduate Schools Programme

The AHRC strongly encourages its funded doctoral students to participate in one of the workshops organised by the Research Councils' GRADSchools programme. The AHRC funds places annually for doctoral students in the second and third year of their research to attend these residential workshops, which take place at a variety of locations throughout the year. They allow doctoral students time away from their research to focus on their skills and abilities and how these may relate to future career plans. These are now run under the Vitae Programme which supports the Professional and Career development of researchers.

Details of the GRADSchools and of other services and support offered are available on the Vitae website here: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/>.

Researchers in Residence Scheme

In October 2004 the AHRC joined the other Research Councils in participating in the Researchers in Residence scheme. Under this scheme the AHRC provides funding to allow doctoral students to spend time in a school engaging in a range of activities to give pupils a chance to learn more about university research, about a particular subject area, and about life as a research student from an enthusiastic new researcher. The scheme is very flexible and the Researchers in Residence staff provide a full briefing, and can match students with a participating school. Participation in this scheme can help develop a wide range of transferable skills valuable for both research and future careers.

For more information on the scheme, please visit the RinR website here:

<http://www.researchersinresidence.ac.uk>

Section 10: Additional information for Collaborative Doctoral Studentships

If a studentship has been made under the Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme 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.

Responsibilities of Collaborative working

Collaborative awards are made to a Research Organisation (Higher Education Institution) and a collaborating partner (normally referred to as the non-academic partner or organisation) to work together on a research project of mutual interest and benefit. They create the framework within which a selected student is able to undertake the research and produce a PhD. All parties, including the student, must be prepared to work in partnership in a collaborative and co-operative fashion and accept the responsibilities to the project and to each other that this method of working brings.

The Research Organisation must suspend or terminate the collaborative award if the partnership or collaboration, as originally specified, ceases to function. In some circumstances, however, alternative solutions may be available as stated below.

The value of a Collaborative Doctoral Award

A doctoral student is entitled to standard tuition fees, college fees (where appropriate), research training funds 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.

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.

All holders of studentships are eligible to apply for Disabled Students' Allowance, if appropriate.

RTSG funding

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.

Partnership agreements

The AHRC expects collaborating partners to have established a written partnership agreement, by the start date of the project, in order to provide a framework and a clear understanding of the operation of the project. The agreement should set out expectations and responsibilities and cover areas such as those listed below:

- Specific objectives, obligations and responsibilities of each party
- Provision of resources
- Issues of ethics or confidentiality
- Ownership of research results and intellectual property
- Outcome of studentships
- Supervision and training
- Monitoring and reviewing
- Timescales/Project plan
- Financial contributions (inc. timing & mechanism for payment)
- Working hours of student; time in department/time in workplace
- Nature of and arrangements for, work with the collaborator
- Risk Assessment
- Conflict Resolution

The student or students involved in the project must be given an opportunity to discuss these elements before the final agreement is put in place. The AHRC would advise students to contact their supervisor if this has not happened or if they have not seen a copy of the agreement by the time they begin work on their research.

The AHRC strongly advises all parties involved in the collaboration not to begin work on the project until an agreement is in place and has been signed.

The AHRC would recommend that this agreement forms the basis of a working project plan which is regularly reviewed and updated.

Intellectual Property Rights, confidentiality and ethical considerations

Issues surrounding Intellectual Property Rights should be clarified before the start of the studentship and form part of the formal agreement. The partners should already have considered this but the student should discuss with their supervisors what kind of outcomes there might be from the research and whilst the details might not be known at the outset, procedures for dealing with it should be put in place. Outcomes, whether academic or commercial, may need to be variously published, protected or exploited so the rights to ownership and the sharing of any resulting benefits should be carefully addressed.

The academic supervisor and the supervisor in the non-academic organisation where the student will be working should make them aware of, and provide procedures for, any ethical issues or issues of confidentiality or sensitivity surrounding data or information to which they may have access. It is vital that a student is able to use their research to publish their PhD within the required timeframe and any restrictions on access to information or data or on publication of such material may affect the ability of the student to submit their thesis.

Supervision and training

Students undertaking Collaborative Doctoral Awards have an exciting opportunity that can offer enhanced benefits to their research, experience, training and skills development. There will be different skills to be offered and varying contributions and benefits to be made by both academic and non-academic organisations and supervisors. There are also potentially greater demands placed upon students in that they will be involved with two sets of supervisors, colleagues and working environments. Clear, established lines of communication and an understanding of requirements and responsibilities by all parties should help to minimise any conflict or tension that could potentially arise.

The partnership agreement should set out the mechanisms for the supervision and training of the student and for the monitoring of the project. The AHRC will expect partners to ensure that adequate levels of supervision are available and maintained to support each student throughout the project. As a minimum they will be expected to have one lead academic supervisor and one lead non-academic supervisor. Please also consult the Research Training requirements above.

The award for the collaboration was made on the understanding that the Research Organisation and the collaborating organisation will provide the necessary support, induction, training, supervision, access and resources, to ensure that the project can be sustained and that the student is able to undertake the necessary research and produce a doctoral thesis within the period of the studentship.

It is reasonable for students to expect regular meetings with both supervisors and to have access to them as required to ensure both the project and their research is on track. Ultimately the academic supervisor must take overall responsibility for a student's academic study and welfare and for the leadership, management and supervision of the project.

Working with the collaborating organisation

During the course of a collaborative studentship a student will be spending time on the collaborating organisation's premises. Throughout this time they must be engaged in activities which are an integral component of the research to be presented in the thesis. The recommended minimum is three months and the maximum eighteen months, although when and how this time is spent will vary depending on the nature of the project and is subject to negotiation between the student and the supervisors.

The non-academic supervisor must have the permission of their employer and be in a position to offer supervision and support to the project. They must also be able to provide a student with, or facilitate access to, necessary resources or those areas of the organisation that are required to undertake the project.

The partnership agreement should lay out the arrangements for the student's supervision and welfare whilst they are undertaking work within the collaborating organisation and it should also include details of the resources and facilities that will be made available to them.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, to respect the working practices, policies, environment and conditions of the organisation in which they are undertaking their work and to abide by any special conditions or

restrictions, such as confidentiality or access to data or collections, that are placed upon them.

The AHRC recommends that the student should receive an induction programme in the non-academic organisation similar to that provided for new employees although this will vary depending on the nature of the project and the size of the organisation. The induction should be tailored to the student's needs but it is also recommended, where appropriate, that the induction also be offered to the academic supervisor where it might serve the needs of furthering trust, understanding and good working relationships.

The AHRC urges all parties to remember that spending time working with the collaborating organisation is one of the key features of a collaborative studentship. It should provide the student with experiences and opportunities that otherwise might not be available during doctoral study. It is expected that students will feel welcomed as a part of the non-academic organisation and that their time there is not only productive but also enjoyable.

Interruptions to study

If a student needs to suspend their studies, for whatever reason, they must inform their supervisors immediately as all parties will need to be aware of any implications for the continuation and completion of the project.

Transfer of collaborative awards and studentships

Collaborative awards are made on the basis of a partnership between a Research Organisation 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 Research Organisation. A student will not be permitted to transfer their studies on the project to another Research Organisation. There may be exceptions to this where the academic supervisor moves to another Research Organisation. If this is the case the AHRC will consider transferring the award and the studentship(s) to the new Organisation 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

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

The AHRC asks for a short annual report on the progress of the project to be completed by the academic supervisor, the non-academic supervisor and the student. In April the

AHRC will notify the academic supervisor, by email, where the form can be accessed on our website and it must be returned by the end of August. This report is intended as a means of monitoring the overall progress of the project. Students should refer to the section on monitoring for details on the procedure for monitoring satisfactory academic progress.

End of Collaborative Award Reports

The AHRC will require supervisors in both organisations and the student to complete full reports at the end of the period of the studentship. The AHRC will notify academic supervisors and students in early summer when the forms are available to download from the AHRC website. These reports will cover both the project and the academic progress of the student.

Submission of thesis

Collaborative doctoral students are expected to submit their thesis within the same time-frame as all doctoral studentships, which is no later than four years after taking up their studentship for full-time study or no later than seven years for part-time study. The Council has a policy of collecting submission rate data from Research Organisations and collaborative students will be surveyed along with standard AHRC doctoral students in the relevant survey year.

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 Research Organisation 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

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/contact/>

The AHRC would also welcome feedback on the experiences of collaborative working. All parties will have an opportunity to do this in the annual report and end of award report but feedback is welcome at any time. This will be used to improve our guidance to applicants, award holders and students in the future.