

## WRDTP Training & Administration Guide

DTP ESRC Grant code: ES/P000746/1

**This guide is for ESRC funded WRDTP students (both 1+3 and +3) and is to be read in conjunction with the [ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide](#), [the UKRI Training Grant Guidance](#) and the [ESRC Postgraduate Training & Development Guidelines 2015](#)**

The WRDTP aims to offer first class training within a vibrant intellectual environment; provide you with opportunities to participate in national and international networks of industrial partners, opinion formers, policy makers and academics; prepare you to engage across the Social Sciences and beyond through interdisciplinary thematic pathways, to address pressing local and global challenges; and equip you with outstanding skills and flexibility to compete nationally and internationally within and beyond academia.

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) places strong emphasis on the provision of broad-based social science research training that equips doctoral researchers with the skills to manage a successful research career and/or to contribute to the wider society in other ways. It is expected that this will include formal training as well as opportunities for research students to integrate with established researchers and to benefit from a rich and diverse research training environment.

The training offered by the WRDTP is designed to meet the *ESRC Postgraduate Training and Development Guidelines 2015*.

The WRDTP aims to equip a new generation of social scientists to address the complex social, economic and political challenges that cross-cut our academic disciplines. Thus, we offer training in Interdisciplinary Pathways:

- Cities, Environment and Liveability
- Security, Conflict and Justice
- Education, Childhood and Youth
- Data, Communication and New Technologies
- Wellbeing, Health and Communities
- Sustainable Growth, Management and Economic Productivity
- Civil Society, Development and Democracy

You will have been assigned to the Pathway that best fits your research project area.

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## Masters Year Training Modules

For those students awarded a 1+3 studentship, i.e. an MA Social Research followed by a PhD programme, the core research training is delivered through a Masters in Social Research framework at your home university. The content of this Masters programme has been harmonised across the seven WRDTP partner universities. The structure normally provides: a minimum of 75 credits of core social science research methods skills and transferable skills and a maximum of 45 credits of core subject-specific training.

*Examples of the module content:*

<b><i>Principles of Research Design:</i></b>	<b><i>Introduction to Quantitative Research and Introduction to Qualitative Research:</i></b>
This content focuses on the principles of research strategy and design, reflexivity, and the impact of alternative ontologies and epistemologies on research design, methods, analysis and theory.	These modules cover data collection, analysis and management.
<b><i>Working Beyond Disciplines:</i></b>	<b><i>Further Quantitative Methods:</i></b>
This will introduce students to ‘grand challenges’ within the thematic fields of each Pathway, and will highlight the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to research.	This will cover those elements not already covered, such as ‘high-level quantitative tools and techniques’ for Economists and will showcase the advanced/innovative/‘sophisticated’ usage of methods.
<b><i>Further Qualitative Methods:</i></b>	<b><i>Subject-based optional modules:</i></b>
This will showcase the advanced/innovative/‘sophisticated’ usage of qualitative methods.	This will extend core subject knowledge in the interdisciplinary thematic area appropriate to the PhD topic.
<b><i>Professional Skills for Researchers:</i></b>	<b><i>Individual Research Project:</i></b>
This is a ‘portfolio’ module, taught through short workshops throughout the year. It may include: bibliographic and computing skills; Ethics Training; Introduction to Impact; IPR and Open Access; Research Management; Communication Skills.	This ‘capstone’ (Dissertation/Research Proposal) module is a self-contained project demonstrating skills of literature review, research design, and data analysis (and collection of primary data where appropriate) which will contextualise training within an individual research project.

## Doctoral Training Modules

All ESRC-funded students (1+3 by progression, or +3 by entry) are normally required to complete at least 60 credits of training during their '+3' period of research. This is monitored for individual students via your Training Needs Analysis (TNA) process. There is flexibility to spread this across the whole of the doctoral period, so that you are engaging with elements of training that directly relate to, and support, appropriate stages of your research and thesis development.

Doctoral level training comprises four main portfolio areas:

<b><i>Interdisciplinary Pathway:</i></b>	<b><i>Discipline:</i></b>
Cutting edge debates through WR-level seminar series; cohort-building through regular events throughout the year, comprising a mixture of Pathway-based research conferences, workshops, engagement events, reading groups, etc.	Departmental-level cohort-building through discipline-specific workshops, reading groups, everyday research management and leadership.
<b><i>Professional Skills for Research Leadership:</i></b>	<b><i>Advanced Research Training:</i></b>
This module develops the professional skills that are expected of independent researchers in the social sciences, enabling them to develop and articulate the skills required to make the transition from postgraduate research to post-doctoral research.	The content will be drawn from a selection of advanced methods training courses. This module builds on Masters level social science research training through a focus on methodological innovation and high-level training (showcasing the work of methodological leaders and specialist workshops), and learning based around the use of methods in context (drawing on students' own projects-in-progress, and work of experienced researchers).

## What is Training Needs Analysis (TNA)?

To ensure that all students within the WRDTP receive a high level of social science training personal development planning is used to allow you and your supervisors to tailor training within an appropriate framework.

The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) framework at each partner university is used to do this and is based on the Researcher Development Framework developed by [Vitae](#).

Your TNA will be reviewed with your supervisory team each year for the rest of your doctoral journey.

Your TNA will be used by the WRDTP as a means of evidencing that you have received the appropriate training in pursuit of becoming an effective social science researcher and will allow the WRDTP to tailor training to meet your ongoing needs.

The TNAs will be independently reviewed by each of the WRDTP universities and reported into the WRDTP Training Group who will then assess the suitability of training on offer and commission additional courses where necessary.

**To book onto the *All Cohort Pathway Training* sessions and *Pathway Specific Training* sessions that is centrally managed by the DTP Office, go to the Training section on the website at [wrdtp.ac.uk](http://wrdtp.ac.uk).**

**For queries related to your training email [training@wrdtp.ac.uk](mailto:training@wrdtp.ac.uk).**

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE ESRC STUDENTSHIP AWARDS

This Administration Guide will help you manage your ESRC studentship award.

To be read in conjunction with the [ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide](#) and the [UKRI Training Grant Guidance](#).

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### Local Contacts in your university

Your local university **Postgraduate Scholarships Office** is responsible for liaising with you on financial matters relating to your award and any subsequent WRDTP funding applications. Your local **WRDTP Link Administrator** is also available to help you with general queries.

The **Local Contacts** at each university can be found at <https://wrctp.ac.uk/useful-administration-contacts/>

For all other general enquiries contact [enquiries@wrctp.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@wrctp.ac.uk)

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## VALUE OF AWARDS AND ALLOWANCES

**All allocated funding must be spent during the standard period of your award and cannot be used during the 'writing up' period. You are advised to spend to the plan you submit when applying for any additional allowances.**

A **full ESRC studentship** covers UK fees and maintenance at the standard Research Council (UKRI) rate together with other allowances, if appropriate. The rates can be found at <https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/developing-people-and-skills/find-studentships-and-doctoral-training/get-a-studentship-to-fund-your-doctorate/> and are revised in January each year for the coming October.

**Fees Only** students are awarded payment of approved fees (as set by the ESRC) and an annual Research Training Support Grant (RTSG). Any funded extensions are Fees Only.

### Enhanced Stipends

- **Advanced Quantitative Methods (AQM) Awards** receive an enhanced stipend of £3,000 per annum.
  - **Collaborative Award** students may receive an allowance each year from the non-academic external partner in addition to their maintenance grant.
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### Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)

This allowance is only offered in the +3 stage of studies.

- Pathway Award holders - £2,000 in total, i.e. £666 p.a.
- Interdisciplinary Research Award holders - £2,000 in total, i.e. £666 p.a.
- AQM Award holders - £2,664 in total, i.e. 888 p.a.
- Collaborative Award holders - £2,000 in total, i.e. £666 p.a.

This allowance is intended to be used by students to pay for expenses which the student/supervisor/department deem to be in direct support of a student's research.

- UK Fieldwork expenses
- UK, EU and overseas conference and summer schools
- Language training courses usually undertaken in the UK prior to an overseas fieldwork trip
- Reimbursement of interpreters, guides, assistants
- Survey costs, e.g. printing, stationery, telephone calls
- Purchase of small items of equipment, e.g. cameras, tape recorders, films, cassettes
- Gifts for local informants
- Books and other reading materials not available through libraries

In exceptional circumstances your local Scholarships Officer may consider requests to purchase a laptop or other computer equipment from this allowance. Any such request must be clearly and adequately justified based on the nature of the research being undertaken and as being essential for the successful completion of your PhD. In these instances, any equipment purchased in excess of £200 will remain in the custody of the WRDTP following completion of your award.

You may carry over unspent funds into the next academic year as long as this is within the period of your ESRC award.

NOTE: at the end of the award any unspent RTSG will be called back into the WRDTP from your department/school.

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### ADDITIONAL FUNDING (RTSG, DLT, OFE, OIV, CIS, SLN)

The WRDTP offers you opportunities to apply for additional funding/time at a number of points throughout the year. The Funding Call timelines are:

	Call	Deadline	AQC Panel
1	Friday 22 September 2023	Friday 3 November 2023	Thursday 9 November 2023
2	Friday 1 December 2023	Friday 26 January 2024	Friday 9 February 2024
3	Friday 8 March 2024	Friday 26 April 2024	Thursday 2 May 2024
4	Friday 10 May 2024	Friday 21 June 2024	Thursday 6 July 2023

**\*Panel decisions will be released no earlier than 10 working days after the panel sits**

Application Forms for each of the schemes can be found in the [Managing your ESRC Award](#) section of the VIRE at wrdtp.ac.uk.

Additional funding opportunities are not available in the first 3 months and last 3 months of your doctoral award. You must therefore ensure that any fieldwork, institutional visits etc. are completed 3 months prior to your funding end date.

Masters students are not eligible to apply.

No retrospective claims can be considered. Thus, you are advised to plan ahead and ensure your funding applications fit the timescales of the Funding Calls.

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### Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) Top Up

You can apply for RTSG Top Up if you have already spent your RTSG allocation **for that year**. You do not have to wait until all of your 3-year allocation is used up before applying for a RTSG Top Up.

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### Difficult Language Training (DLT)

A funded extension to your award of up to 12 months may be considered if you need to acquire or develop a working ability with a difficult language in order to carry out fieldwork or other parts of your research (this increases the studentship award length).

Any anticipated difficult language training must be mentioned in your original application. Extensions beyond 6 months are normally only allowed if you need to spend an extended period of time overseas in order to obtain these language skills. In this case, a special case would need to be made by you and your supervisor.

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### **Overseas Fieldwork Expenses (OFE)**

The overall WRDTP ESRC grant includes a notional £450 per studentship for OFE. Not all doctoral researchers will undertake overseas fieldwork therefore the funds are used flexibly by the DTP for those who make an application and are successful. The actual allocation of funds for overseas fieldwork is at the DTP's discretion.

The DTP is unlikely to be able to fully fund an OFE claim due to the limited funding. Normally the DTP will not fund OFE applications in excess of £5,000. You may use your RTSG to supplement the costs associated with overseas fieldwork, however, this is entirely at your discretion.

An OFE visit will normally last for up to a *maximum* of 12 months, be an integral part of the PhD and take place during the life of the award.

You must have mentioned that overseas fieldwork is planned at the application stage of your award.

You are also strongly encouraged to also seek alternative sources of funding via your Department/School and give these details on your application.

Part-time students can become eligible for an overseas fieldwork grant if they transfer for a fixed period to a full-time status for the duration of the fieldwork.

**\* PLEASE NOTE:** Accommodation for your OFE or OIV should not be booked through Airbnb.

Airbnb are 'un-regulated' therefore do not adhere to the safety standards required for our insurance, so any claims would be unsupported. Airbnb are not responsible for checking that accommodation listed on their site have smoke alarms, fire escape exits etc.

Universities must put the health and safety of staff and students first when travelling even if it is the cheaper option. \*

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## Overseas Institutional Visits (OIV)

All full-time ESRC funded research award holders are eligible to apply for paid extensions of up to three months to their PhD studentship in order to visit overseas institutions (universities or esteemed research organisations).

This scheme offers financial support and a funded extension for you to establish research networks; disseminate early research findings; participate in seminars and other academic activities that are directly relevant to your research and to undertake specialist research training not available within the UK.

Fees Only students will only be entitled to an extension to their fees and RTSG.

You can apply for up to three separate trips (to the same institution) as part of your overseas institutional visit, but the total period spent overseas during the period of the studentship must not exceed three months in total. All trips must be included in one single application.

There is a cap on the total costs of the visit of £4,000, though applicants should note that the value of financial investment will be taken into consideration when assessing applications.

End of Visit Report – you are required to submit a satisfactory end of visit report within two weeks of completion. The WRDTP will withhold funding or reclaim the expenses paid if this is not submitted.

**\* PLEASE NOTE:** Accommodation for your OFE or OIV should not be booked through Airbnb.

Airbnb are 'un-regulated' therefore do not adhere to the safety standards required for our insurance, so any claims would be unsupported. Airbnb are not responsible for checking that accommodation listed on their site have smoke alarms, fire escape exits etc.

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## WRDTP Company Internship Scheme (CIS)

If you have already forged a collaboration with a company, it may be possible to apply for funding from the WRDTP Company Internship Scheme (CIS) to support a placement/internship.

The *WRDTP Company Internship Scheme* provides ESRC WRDTP-funded PhD students with the opportunity to spend **up to three months** in a non-academic organisation within the public, civil society (voluntary) or private sector to work as part of a team involved with policy and practice development.

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The Scheme is open to ESRC WRDTP funded PhD students who are currently in full-time study (or part-time equivalent). Any internship must be an integral part of your PhD.

Full-time students in receipt of a maintenance grant will receive a funded extension to their award covering the length of the internship and up to a maximum of £1,000 per month for travel and accommodation expenses (part-time students will receive this on a pro rata basis).

You will continue to be paid the maintenance grant (and any enhanced stipend).

Fees Only students will receive the same accommodation and travel allowance, but the extension period will only include the payment of fees.

If you withdraw from a WRDTP Company Internship and travel/accommodation has already been paid for, the ESRC WRDTP is entitled to claim back the costs of travel/accommodation for the remainder of the internship period.

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### **Interdisciplinary Student-led Networks (SLN)**

The WRDTP is promoting interdisciplinary activities by offering a small amount of funding for students to run activities/events etc. to develop their own themed Networks.

These Student-led Networks focus on substantive themes (for example, gender, sustainability, big data etc.) that are multi-disciplinary. Ideally, these networks/groups will encourage participation from staff/students across a variety of DTP pathway areas and perhaps even wider to PGR students in other areas of the Arts and Humanities and Science subjects.

The funding can be used to cover the running of events (room bookings, presenters' fees, promotion/advertising and catering), travel and subsistence to support the development of the Networks.

The Network can only apply ONCE to the scheme. The funding is offered to support start-up and Networks are advised to see funding elsewhere to sustain their activities.

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### **OTHER FINANCIAL ISSUES**

**Maternity Leave – see ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide, also see UKRI T&Cs**

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**Paternity Leave & Adoption Leave or Shared Parental Leave – see ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide, also see UKRI T&Cs**

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**Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA) – also see UKRI T&Cs**

Any disabled student who, because of a disability, is obliged to incur additional expenditure in connection with their studies, may be eligible for an allowance. Requests for DSA must first be discussed with the Disability Officer at the home university.

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**Illness - see also the ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide, UKRI T&Cs and guidance documents**

Award payments (*sick pay*) can continue during absences covered by medical certificates for up to 13 weeks, within any 12 month period. Additional time and additional funding, will be added to your normal registered period. Beyond 13 weeks, studentships should be suspended.

**Masters students** –Students who are taken ill in their Master's year for more than a few weeks would normally be expected to request a suspension of their award. Due to the structured nature of the programme of training, students in their research training year (Master's) would be expected to rejoin their course at the same point that they left it.

Separate arrangements for illness relating to Covid-19 are in place. Please find more details on the WRDTP [website](#).

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**Student transfer to/from another DTP**

A transfer will only be considered to an accredited training pathway that is appropriate for the research project. If a student wishes to transfer to a DTP and/or pathway which is not accredited by the ESRC, or to a subject outside the ESRC's remit, then they will have to withdraw from their ESRC award.

Permission to transfer a studentship must be obtained in advance from the ESRC via the DTP Office.

In order to apply for a transfer, the student is advised to contact the [Local Contact](#) in the first instance for advice. (note: any match/co studentship funding may need to be considered.)

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### **Student internal transfer to another HEI within the WRDTP**

A transfer will only be considered to an accredited pathway that is appropriate for the research project.

Following local departmental agreement, permission to transfer a studentship must be obtained in advance from the DTP Office.

In order to apply for a transfer, the student is advised to contact the [Local Contact](#) in the first instance for advice. (note: any match/co studentship funding may need to be considered)

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### **OTHER CHANGES TO AWARD**

Contact your local Postgraduate Scholarships Office at your university for advice regarding the following:-

- Status Transfer – Permanent/Fixed Periods Transfer Between Part-Time and Full-Time Registration
  - Termination/withdrawal from studies
  - Suspension or Leave of Absence (LOA) from studies
  - Extension of Thesis Submission Date
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If you have any queries regarding any information in this guide, please get in touch with your Local Contact in the first instance.

For Training enquiries email [training@wrntp.ac.uk](mailto:training@wrntp.ac.uk)

For other general enquiries email [enquiries@wrntp.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@wrntp.ac.uk)

**White Rose DTP Office**  
**September 2023**