**Key Conditions for ESRC Doctoral Training Centre Studentships (DTC) Responsibilities of studentship holders**

Those receiving ESRC studentships and those responsible for supervising and organising their postgraduate studies are expected to abide by the ESRC terms and conditions as set out in this document.

The ESRC accepts no liability for the manner in which the work in connection with the studentship is undertaken. The studentship holder and the Research Organisation in which the studentship is held are responsible in all respects for the work and its consequences.

Awards are given to Research Organisations which the ESRC has recognised for the quality and relevance of their training provision. Awards are therefore made on the assumption that the Research Organisation has adequate facilities for the research or training proposed in accordance with the requirements of the *Postgraduate Training Guidelines 2009*, and that the policies, procedures and facilities specified in the Research Organisation’s submission to the ESRC for the purposes of recognition will be applied in relation to each award holder. It is the responsibility of recognised Research Organisation’s to nominate students for awards who can meet the academic and residential guidelines outlined in Annex 1.

Where the ESRC is the lead Council, these rules must be abided by.

The ESRC is concerned with maintaining a high standard of training and supervision, and for this the Council relies on the co-operation of administrators, heads of departments and others who support students. The ESRC takes seriously its role to support high quality training opportunities for postgraduate students and believes in the consistent application of policies and practices to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate unlawful discrimination. The ESRC expects that Research Organisations are fair and transparent in the recruitment of students; students must be selected and treated on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of their sex, transexuality, race, nationality, religion, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or age. Research Organisations are expected to comply with all equal opportunities legislation in force and where an organisation is shown to be in breach of these, ESRC is prepared to invoke sanctions.

The ESRC relies on the Research Organisations administrative authorities to ensure that they make full use of all other sources of financial assistance open to students, and that the authorities’ own expenditure on postgraduate awards in the social sciences is not reduced on account of the ESRC studentships awarded to their students. However, if an ESRC award holder who is subsequently granted an additional award or an equivalent form of support which is sufficient to maintain the student, e.g. from employers to employees on secondment on full pay, will not be entitled to ESRC support from the date on which the new award/form of support starts.

All study undertaken as part of the ESRC award must be carried out within the UK, except as part of an accreditation, overseas fieldwork which is an integral part of the study, conferences, or training such as an Overseas Institutional Visit. Students may not, for example, write up their thesis whilst resident outside the UK during the period of their ESRC award. In such a case fees and/or maintenance grant will not be payable in respect of the student award. Students will also be expected to be resident close to the Research Organisation at which they are registered and we would expect there to be direct contact between the student and supervisor. This applies to full-time and part-time students.

**Managing an Award**

ESRC accepts that there will be circumstances within the period of an award where it may be appropriate for the award to be extended, be converted to part-time status (or vice versa) or to be suspended or terminated.

**Extensions:**

The ESRC will not provide more than five years funding to any full-time student or more than seven years funding for any part-time student under any circumstances. Any initial funding request of less than five years for full time or four years for part time can be extended for any of the following reasons.

**Difficult Language Training including Language Training for UK Fieldwork**

Up to one extra year's extra support may be considered if a student needs to acquire or develop a working ability with a difficult language (including UK fieldwork) in order to carry out fieldwork or other parts of their research (this is over and above the funded length of the studentship). Students following a pre-described master’s course are not eligible to apply during this training. Any anticipated difficult language training should be mentioned in the student's project summary within the SDP. Extensions beyond 6 months should only be allowed if the student needs to spend an extended period of time overseas in order to obtain these language skills. If the student has already undertaken a pre-described master’s course, it is expected that some progress with language acquisition will have been made and therefore it is not expected that extensions beyond 6 months should be made. Students will need to apply to their supervisor regarding any request for difficult language training.

**Training in Film Making**

Where film or video recordings are an integral part of the evidence submitted and used in defence of a thesis, an extension of up to six months may be granted by the Research Organisation to enable training in film making. The ESRC expects, however, that students interested in film as research data will have already undertaken training prior to the start of their PhD studies, for example, through a Masters degree course in Visual Anthropology. Where an extension is also being requested for a difficult language, the overall length extension cannot exceed 12 months.

Students will need to apply to their supervisor regarding any request for training in film making. The ESRC should be informed on the SDP of any extension granted within a month of the change being formally agreed by the Research Organisation. It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to amend student’s end dates on the SDP accordingly. Any costs associated with the extension should be found from within the DTG.

**Overseas Institutional Visits**

All full-time ESRC studentship holders are eligible to apply for financial support for overseas institutional visits (OIVs) within their studentship period, to visit overseas universities or esteemed research organisations.

This additional funding is intended to provide applicants with the opportunity to establish research networks, to disseminate early research findings, to participate in seminars and other academic activities directly related to their research, or to undertake specialist research training that is not available in the UK.  In the application, students are required to enter detailed costs of their visit, e.g. flights, accommodation and general living expenses, along with justification of these costs.  the DTC will be looking at contributing to these expenses.

**Please apply for this funding at least 2 months before the proposed date of your visit.  It is a condition that all successful applicants must submit an end-of-award report to** [**Rose Harris**](http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/students/moneyMatters/financialSupport/whosWho.aspx)**| within 2 weeks of the end of the visit.**

To apply, please print out the [Overseas Institutional](http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/students/moneyMatters/financialSupport/ESRCforms/Overseas-University-Visit-Guidance-and-application2014.docx)|[/University Visits form](http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/students/moneyMatters/financialSupport/ESRCforms/Overseas-University-Visit-Guidance-and-application2014.docx)|, the guidance notes and application advice.  It is important that your supervisor reads the notes before authorising the visit.

Once the form has been completed and you have the agreement of your supervisor, please submit the form to [Rose Harris](http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/students/moneyMatters/financialSupport/whosWho.aspx)| in the [Financial Support Office.](http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/students/moneyMatters/financialSupport/Home.aspx)|

**DTC Partnership Visits - Overseas Institutional Visits to Partner universities in Africa, Asia and South America**

The DTC has specific funding for visits to partner universities in specific countries.  Details can be found on the DTC Moodle Site (ESRC PhD). The universities involved are:

* National University of Singapore
* Peking University (Beijing)
* University of Cape Town
* Gertulio Vargas Foundation (Brazil)
* Tata Institute of Social Sciences (India)
* East Asia Group: University of Tokyo; Hitotsubashi University (Tokyo); Fudan University (Shanghai); Seoul National University
* Africa Group: University of Dar-es-Salaam; Makerere University; University of Nairobi; University of Ghana; University of Ibadan

This scheme is designed to help you to make the most of the global opportunities offered by LSE, to enrich your research opportunities and to deepen and develop the important relationships between LSE and these institutions.

Students can apply for up to three separate trips as part of their 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 a single application.

Students and their supervisors should give consideration to the timing of institutional visits. Visits are intended to be an integral part of the PhD research and, as such, any visit taking place in the final year of the studentship must be completed at least three months before the end of the studentship period.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/studentServicesCentre/financialSupportOffice/ESRCAwardHolders.htm>

Students must submit a visit report of between 1000 and 2000 words within two weeks of completion of the visit. The report should detail the outcomes of the visit and how participation has enhanced their PhD. This report should be countersigned by the student’s academic supervisor. If students fail to submit a satisfactory end of visit report within two weeks of completion the ESRC will withhold payment of visit expenses to their institution.

**ESRC Internship Scheme**

The ESRC internship Scheme is a joint initiative offered by the ESRC and a number of government/public bodies and other organisations.  **This is different to any internship scheme offered by DTC’s.** This scheme is open to all ESRC funded PhD students who are currently in full time or part time equivalent when taking part in an internships award. An Internship must be an integral part of the student’s PhD, and therefore must start at least 3 months prior to the end date of their award, and not within the first 3 months of the PhD.

Award holders offered an internship will receive a 3 month extension to their PhD award and have access to an allowance of up to £3,000 for accommodation and travel. Fees only students will receive the same accommodation and travel allowance but the three month extension will only include payment of fees. All expenses must be incurred during the internship period. It is the applicants' responsibility to secure accommodation.

Whilst applicants may apply for more than one internship, if successful they can only accept one. Only one internship will normally be permitted per award. Internships must take place within the period of the award and not take place at the end of the funding period.

***How to apply***

Students must apply to the ESRC, via their central institutional authorities, in response to internship calls:

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding-and-guidance/funding-opportunities/2364/Student_Internship_Scheme_.aspx>

These calls will be posted on the ESRC website. The ESRC will then notify the HEI of the outcome of the student's application.

**Maternity**

If a student becomes pregnant such that the expected date of confinement will occur during the period of their award, the ESRC will allow up to six months paid maternity leave without the level of their award being reduced. Financial support for any time beyond six months should be sought from the institution's Access Fund in the first instance. Should the circumstances of an award be changed following a period of maternity leave, students should notify their supervisor and Nominated Contact immediately and efforts will be made to take account of these circumstances in flexible ways. The total period of financial support available to students will not be extended beyond the usual thirty-six months plus the period of up to six months maternity leave.

Students may also apply for up to a further six months’ suspension of their award (unpaid) because of the pregnancy, providing a total period of paid and unpaid maternity leave of up to twelve months. Please note that such paid and unpaid periods of leave must be taken consecutively. If a student chooses not to take

the full twelve months at the time of their pregnancy they will not be able to take the remaining period at a later date.

Due to the structured nature of most taught research training programmes, students who take maternity leave during any research training programme are expected to rejoin their course in the subsequent year at the stage at which they left it. This is to ensure that all elements of the training are successfully completed in advance of their doctoral study. This would normally require the six months paid maternity leave to be automatically followed by a six month period of unpaid leave.

It is the student’s responsibility to apply directly to their Nominated Contact and supervisor. This application must be supported by a copy of their MAT B1 form.

**Paternity leave or additional Paternity leave**

Paternity Leave: A total of 10 days paternity leave may be taken at any time during a partner’s pregnancy or within three months following the birth. This period is regarded as additional leave of absence from studies and the award will not be extended. If the student needs to take any further time, this must be taken as a suspension to the award.

It is the student’s responsibility to apply directly to their supervisor.

Additional Paternity leave: Where a student’s partner has returned to work, they may be able to claim up to 26 weeks of paid additional paternity leave. In order to qualify hey must have the main responsibility (alongside the responsibility of the mother or adopter taking adoption leave) for the upbringing of the child. The DTC must ensure that the appropriate documentation is in place when considering any such request.

**Adoption Leave**

Adoption leave has the same terms and conditions as maternity leave (please see above.) It is the student’s responsibility to apply directly to their supervisor. It is the student’s responsibility to apply to directly to their supervisor. This application must be supported by official documentation. The ESRC will need to be advised of any adoption leave in the SDP. This must include the new award end date.

**Transfers:**

A transfer to another institution will only be considered to an accredited pathway that is appropriate for the research project. If a student wishes to transfer to a Research Organisation 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.

The DTG will not be amended to take account of the transfer of a student from one Research Organisation to another or from one department to another within the Research Organisation. Transfers may be arranged where they are essential to the student's training e.g. when a supervisor is moving, and should be by agreement between the Research Organisations concerned. Research Council expects that the arrangements for such a transfer would include the relevant funds. The SDP should be updated following a student transfer. The ESRC reserves the right withdraw funding if student details are not maintained. Any transferred agreed to should be reported in the annual report.

**Permanent Transfer Between Part-Time and Full-Time Registration**

A student may apply to transfer from a full-time to part-time studentship award or vice-versa. Each case must be considered by the Research Organisation on its own merits. The ESRC 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.

The rules governing permanent transfers are:

(i) a case cannot be considered if it is made in the final year of the award or which will apply only to the final year of the award,

(ii) holders of collaborative awards will require the agreement of the collaborating partner before any request can be considered,

(iii) a transfer will not normally be allowed for acute health problems where suspension of an award is the appropriate course of action. However, where a health problem might prevent a student from permanently studying on a full-time basis, a case for a transfer to part-time can be considered,

(iv) a transfer from part-time to full-time cannot involve employment that would prevent the student from working on the PhD on a full-time basis,

(v) a transfer from full-time to part-time will be considered where a change in domestic circumstances means that a dependant requires more of the award holders time, or where the award holder has taken up full-time employment (provided that the employer is not the diploma-awarding or degree-awarding body at which you are undertaking your PhD),

(vi) fixed period transfers are unable to be considered within a pre-described master’s programme reserved for the research training element of the studentship.

(vii) a transfer can only be approved if the Research Organisation has the necessary ESRC accreditation

If the case for an award to be transferred from part-time to full-time status is approved by the Research Organisation, the maintenance grant, Research Organisation fees and other allowances as appropriate would be offered on a full time equivalent, depending on the period remaining on the award. Other terms

and conditions will be the same as for full-time students, particularly those relating to part-time working. If a student transfers from full-time to part-time registration, they will be eligible for the normal allowances paid to part-time students.

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. 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.

EU students should note the eligibility for the payment of maintenance grant will also be subject to the residency regulations and they should discuss the issue with their institutional authorities before making any arrangements.

**Change of status for part-time students for fixed periods**

Few part-time students wish or are able to convert to full-time, but there are often benefits to be gained by the student undertaking a fixed period of full-time study, for example: to carry out fieldwork; or to carry out detailed data analysis work, where there is a very large dataset. There might be other cases that would be appropriate: each request must be treated by the Research Organisation on its own merits and on the strength of the case put forward.

In the case of a change of status to conduct fieldwork, the Research Organisation should see evidence that extensive fieldwork is being proposed. This might not specify firm dates or a fixed plan, but the intention should be clearly stated.

As such, part-time students will be permitted to apply for fixed periods of full-time study of between 3 months and one year. This would have to be taken as a single block, rather than at intervals. A student may make more than one such request, although no one can be awarded more than one year in total over the whole period of the award.

In any request from a part-time student to their Research Organisation for a fixed period transfer of status they must detail:

(i) what work will be done,

(ii) the benefits to them and their thesis,

(iii) an explanation of why the work cannot be done part-time,

(iv) the period of the transfer,

(v) other relevant details, e.g. training required, supervisory arrangements etc, and

(vi) a clear statement confirming that they have been released from their job for the period and that they will be working full-time on their PhD.

It is extremely important to note that the ESRC cannot pay maintenance grant if a student is undertaking paid work in excess of that already permitted for full-time students. For any block of full-time study therefore, the student must take unpaid leave from their place of work.

For any approved change of status period a student would have the same terms and conditions as a full-time student and, in particular, they will need to stay within the restrictions which apply to 'other work' for the period. A maintenance grant and full-time fees would be paid to the student on a pro rata basis.

The length of the studentship would also be re-calculated to account for any change in status.

A transfer is unable to be considered within a pre-described master’s programme reserved for the research training element of the studentship.

A part-time student's request for a change of status for a fixed period needs to be submitted to their supervisor for a decision. 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.

**Regular Monitoring of Academic Performance:**

The ESRC reserves the right to withdraw funds from students who are not meeting the relevant terms and conditions of their awards. It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to ensure that student progress is satisfactory:

Examples of monitoring arrangements are:

1. • It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to ensure student progress and it is their responsibility to withdraw funds where necessary
2. • Any pending Master’s qualification that was outstanding at the time the studentship was offered has now been awarded
3. • Doctoral students about to enter their final year of funding have upgraded to full doctoral status.

The ESRC do not require supervisors to report student progress to the ESRC. It does however expect the Research Organisation to follow departmental Codes of Practice and internal quality control mechanisms. All the research councils subscribe to the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Programmes and therefore require Research Organisations in receipt of research council funding to adhere to the QAA code. The ESRC would normally expect supervisory arrangements to be put in place at the outset to facilitate the transition from Masters training to the PhD itself. There should be frequent contact between student and supervisor to review progress during the Masters as well as through the period of doctoral research.

Students in receipt of funding for masters training (of any length) should not be permitted to continue to receive funding for the PhD if the masters degree is not awarded. Likewise if at any point during the masters or PhD studies the student is not considered of the required standard to complete the PhD funding should be withdrawn.

By the end of the student’s second year (or fourth if part time) it is expected that Research Organisations upgrade students from MPhil to full PhD status. ESRC funding cannot be continued if upgrading has not taken place. If an upgrade is not made due to lack of progress supervisors must inform the ESRC immediately. The ESRC will terminate the award either by the end of the second year (or part time equivalent) or on the submission date of the student’s dissertation. Students are eligible to apply to the ESRC for a three month extension (6 month part time) in order to complete approved MPhil training.

Research Organisations have a responsibility to withdraw funding in such circumstances and for reclaiming any overpaid maintenance grant or allowances to the student.

**Deferral of Student Start**

An ESRC studentship will normally start on 1st October. Students are only eligible to defer for up to 12 months.

**Termination**

Research Organisations must only consider termination of a studentship as a last resort and, when a student is identified as experiencing difficulty, every effort must be made by their supervisor and institutional authority to work with the student, to enable successful completion of their studies.

If a student completes their studies and submits a doctoral thesis before the end of the studentship the student’s funding should be terminated. It is reasonable, assuming the agreement of the supervisor in consultation with the student that up to four weeks notice may be allowed to complete domestic arrangements together with up to two weeks leave. This period should not extend beyond the next date for payment of the maintenance grant.

If a student submits their thesis before the end of their award, continuation of funding can be considered if the student has an agreed programme of work related to the publication of their research which they propose to pursue up until the next quarter payment.

If a full-time student takes up paid full-time employment, before the expiry date of their award, the award will terminate on the date of appointment unless a prior arrangement has been made with the ESRC to transfer to a part-time award.

If an award is prematurely terminated for any reason, the student must repay to the Research Organisation any monies including maintenance grant, fieldwork contribution, etc overpaid to them. All debts that arise as a result of over payments, for whatever reason, must be actively pursued by the Research Organisation. The ESRC will seek reimbursement during the reconciliation process at the end of the grant

A studentship may be terminated, or its conditions varied, at any time, at the absolute discretion of the ESRC.

**Suspensions**

Studentships are intended to be held on a continuous basis. Sometimes though a student may need to interrupt studies, for example as a result of their own persistent health problems or those of dependants, or to take up the opportunity of a temporary, short term post which can be justified as being highly relevant to their thesis or research training.

Suspensions can be approved provided that:

(i) the period of suspension does not exceed one calendar year in any one instance. Total periods of **suspension must not exceed one calendar year** **during the lifetime of the award**,

(ii) the student's supervisor has given their permission for the student to suspend their studies. For CASE awards the collaborative partner must also indicate their approval of any requested suspension period;

(iii) the student's supervisor certifies that the suspension of studies will not delay the submission of the final thesis by more than the length of the suspension;

(iv) the request is made in advance: retrospective requests must not be accepted.

Suspension of studies requests must not be considered on the grounds of financial hardship.

Due to the nature of training received in the Masters year of a 1+3 award ( and equivalent structures), suspensions should be for 12 months to allow the student to rejoin the course at the same point at which they left it.

Periods of suspension are usually added to the standard calculation of the thesis submission date and thus taken into account when the ESRC thesis submission rates are calculated.

If an award is suspended for any reason, the student must repay to the Research Organisation any monies including maintenance grant, fieldwork contribution, etc overpaid to them. All debts that arise as a result of over payments, for whatever reason, must be actively pursued by the Research Organisation.

Where there is any doubt about a student's continuation of studies, then a temporary 'hold' should be placed on maintenance grant payments to students until issues have been resolved.

**Illness**

If a student is prevented from working by illness for a continuous period of more than two weeks they must inform their supervisor immediately and send in a medical certificate (regardless as to whether or not the student is suspending studies.)

They should also inform their supervisor if they suffer frequent short absences for medical or other reasons that are likely to lead to considerable delay in their programme of study. This is particularly important if they are a research student, as periods of leave notified in this way can be taken into account when calculating their thesis submission date.

**Doctoral Students -** Payments of the award can continue for absences covered by medical certificates for up to 13 weeks, within any twelve month period. However, the total paid period of an award, including payment whilst ill, must not exceed the original offer of length of funding.

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.

Abeyances on account of illness must not normally be approved for periods in excess of twelve months. However, in cases where a student is confidently expected to resume study within the current academic term a degree of discretion can be exercised.

**1+3 Students (and equivalent structures)** - please note that the 13 weeks paid sick leave rule would not normally apply to students in their research training year (masters). Students who are taken ill in their Masters year for more than a few weeks would normally be expected to request a suspension of their award.

Part-time students in this position should note the rules and their regulations with regard to the payment of fees and notify their supervisor in the case of long term illness.

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.

**Change to Project Details**

Students must be made aware that it is a condition of award that significant changes to the title and/or focus of their research need to be approved in advance by their Research Organisation. Such approval should not be given unless a clear justification is provided.

Only in the most exceptional circumstances should a radical change of topic or direction be approved for the research (and consequently a complete change of title) where a student has a +3 studentship or has commenced the +3 of a 1+3 studentship. Some studentship awards were made through an open competition in which a number of criteria determine the allocations of such awards. The strength of the individual candidate is only one such factor and the quality of the research proposal, its significance for the subject area and the match between the thesis topic and the supervisory expertise available also inform the assessment of applications.

**Change to Supervision**

The Head of Department, School or Faculty will have appointed an appropriate member or members of staff of the Research Organisation to act as supervisor(s) or advisor(s) to the student and be responsible for student progress. The principal supervisor must be from within the student’s pathway and from an Research Organisation within the DTC.

Any requested changes in supervision will need to be approved by the student's Head of Department, School or Faculty. The Head of Department, School or Faculty has the right to turn down a supervisor if they consider he/she is not suitable/appropriate or has insufficient experience. Research Organisations should consider any impact that a change of department or supervisor may have on the submission date before approving such a change.

Any new supervisors should be aware of their responsibilities towards their students as laid down in the *Postgraduate Training and Development Guidelines 2009* and this document.

It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to ensure that any changes to a student’s supervision are amended on the SDP within one month of the agreed change.

**Thesis Submission Date**

ESRC 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.

Students holding 1+3 awards should submit within 5 years of commencing the '1' (or 4 years from the commencement of the +3).

Students holding +3 awards must submit within 4 years of the commencement of their award.

Students holding 2 + 2 awards should submit within 4 years of commencing the +2 year of their award.

Part-time students holding +3 awards must submit within 7 years. Students holding part-time 1+3 studentships will be required to submit within 9 years. As such, students who have a fixed period of full-time study - whatever the length - retain their 7 or 9 year submission date, depending on the status of the award.

All students should aim to submit by the end of their funded period. Students will find it much more difficult to finish writing their thesis whilst also undertaking full-time employment.

Where a student submits their thesis within the period of the award the date of submission normally becomes the funding end date. All debts that arise as a result of over payments, for whatever reason, must be actively pursued by the Research Organisation.

Extensions to the submission date cannot be considered in retrospect. Where a student becomes pregnant or experiences problems relating to accident, illness, or exceptional personal circumstances during the course of their study, the ESRC will consider a case for extending their submission deadline. Any request for an extension to the submission date due to illness/pregnancy cannot be considered unless evidence of illness/pregnancy has been provided to the Research Organisation at time of the illness. Nor can extension to submission dates be granted for periods of employment (no matter how relevant they may be to the writing up of a thesis or to career opportunities) after the award has finished.

***How students apply for a submission date extension***

Students must apply to their nominated contact at their Research Organisation 2-3 months before the submission deadline date who will then contact the ESRC for approval. Any request must be supported in writing by their supervisor and be fully supported by medical evidence if the request is based on an illness. Please contact Rose Harris in the first instance for advice.

**First destination data**

ESRC also requires universities to provide data on the first employment destinations of all ESRC-funded students. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) on behalf of all the research councils now collects destination data and universities should ensure that they complete the research council funding fields accurately.

**Publication of Results/Thesis Abstracts**

Decisions on whether the results of a student's work are published are at the discretion of the student and supervisor.

However, if a decision is made to publish any of a student's work, as an ESRC-funded postgraduate student, it must include an acknowledgement of ESRC financial support. Following discussions between the Research Information Network, Research Councils, other funders and journal publishers, a standard format has been agreed for acknowledging funders in journal articles. This is to enable improved tracking of the publications generated by funded research projects.

For articles published in journals, or deposited in institutional or subject-based repositories, the acknowledgement of funding should take the form of a sentence as in the following example, with the funding agency written out in full, followed by the grant number in square brackets:

This work was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council [grant number xxxx].

Multiple grant numbers should be separated by comma and space. Where the research was supported by more than one agency, the different agencies should be separated by a semi-colon, with "and" before the final funder. For example:

This work was supported by the Wellcome Trust [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Natural Environment Research Council [grant number zzzz]; and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council [grant number aaaa].

Students are advised to refer to the ESRC Resarch Data Policy that is available on the ESRC Website. ESRC-funded students are required to formally offer any data created or repurposed during the lifetime of the award to the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS) within three months of the end of the award. The ESRC-funded students are responsible for providing these data to the ESDS for assessment, and if accepted, to ensure that they meet the requirements of the ESDS for preservation and future re-use. Further guidance on data deposit with the ESDS is available at <http://www.esds.ac.uk/aandp/create/offering.asp>.

ESRC-funded students who are likely to produce a data of any kind as a result of their grant are recommended to read the ESDS data management guides at http://www.esds.ac.uk/support/datamanguides.asp

The ESDS will be also pleased to offer any further advice, if required.

Any enquiry should be addressed to: acquisitions@esds.ac.uk or Economic and Social Data Service, UK Data Archive, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ.

As an important source of public funding for postgraduate training in the social sciences, the ESRC has an obligation towards the general public and academic community to try to ensure that such training is conducted in a professional manner and will not give rise to distress or annoyance to individuals. It therefore attaches considerable importance to the maintenance of high ethical standards in the training it supports as well as in the development, conduct and reporting of the research undertaken.

**Ethics**

It is the responsibility of Research Organisations to ensure that the appropriate ethical mechanisms are in place. The ESRC has its own Framework for Research Ethics which should be consulted by Research Organisations. There is now a mandatory section on ethical approval on the SDP. Research Organisations should ensure that proper consideration has been given to any ethical issues that the research project may raise. Where an ethics review is yet to be undertaken, this should be stated in the SDP along with a statement explaining how any issues will be addressed.

Should any ethical considerations arise in the design or conduct of any proposed postgraduate study, a student and their supervisor(s) should address these explicitly. Full consideration should be given to such ethical implications drawing on any ethical standards which are appropriate to their discipline. In particular, students should ensure that:

(i) they are aware of any published material on research ethics relevant to their discipline or field of study, such as guidelines published by Learned Societies;

(ii) potential ethical issues are identified and built in to the design of the research at an early stage,

(iii) they are open and honest about the aims, methods and intended use of results from your postgraduate studies, and

(iv) that confidentiality of data on individuals is maintained within the limits of the law.

It is the ESRC’s policy that potentially valuable results or products arising from ESRC funded research and postgraduate training should, where practicable, be exploited for the benefit of the UK economy, the quality of life of the nation, the institution, the award holder and the UK social science community. This policy applies to all forms of results or products, regardless of the nature of the intellectual property rights involved.

Whilst the ESRC does not retain any rights for itself from the exploitation of the results or products of the work of the students it supports, it is concerned that students and Research Organisations are able to benefit from the exploitation of such results or products. In particular, award holders should not enter into any agreement, whether implicitly or explicitly, giving any other person or organisation the right to suppress results or products of work which has been funded by the ESRC. Supervisors and students involved in collaborative arrangements with organisations, for example through CASE studentships, need to be fully aware of their position; unwary students have sometimes been prevented from publishing their thesis. University Registrars or Industrial Liaison Officers should be able to offer advice to students.

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. Further information on commercial exploitation can be found in the ESRC publication, *Research Funding Guide*, which is available from university Registrars or Finance Officers, or from the ESRC website.

It is a requirement of the student to ensure that the information they provide is accurate.

The ESRC may, from time to time, provide information on ESRC funded students to third parties on a discretionary basis. This will be primarily for the purpose of providing students with information relating to research training, research funding or employment opportunities.

Students and researchers who believe that they may have a product that might be commercially exploited are invited to take part in the Research Councils Business Plan Competition. The competition is open to researchers from across the whole breadth of activity supported by the Research Councils. The competition presents the opportunity to win up to £25,000 of start-up funding. Further details on the competition are published at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/bpc>

**Scholarships and Research Work**

Students must inform their Research Organisation 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.

The ESRC would encourage research students to take up other scholarships whilst undertaking their ESRC studentship. In particular, the ESRC would encourage students to participate in schemes such as ERASMUS/SOCRATES. In addition, there may be times when the offer of a particular piece of research work will greatly add to the quality of a student's PhD study being undertaken

although such work would not be considered appropriate within the Masters training year. However, it is important to note that there may be implications for financial entitlement made under the ESRC studentship award in these circumstances.

If a student takes up a scholarship, research work or additional research training during the course of an ESRC full-time studentship, then the following rules must be applied:

(i) a suspension of the studentship will apply, if the study, research or training undertaken during the period is relevant but not integral or essential to the ESRC studies,

(ii) an honorary studentship should be counted against the three-year limit if assistance given by the scholarship or research work is used for the same purposes for which the ESRC studentship was awarded: thus, the thesis submission date will not be amended, and

(iii) The ERASMUS/SOCRATES scheme is normally counted as an honorary studentship.

If a scholarship award is paid by a foreign government on a non-reciprocal basis, the ESRC will supplement the award to the level of an ESRC studentship in accordance with the rules on residency and length of funding. This supplement is not though available in the case of contract research work.

Students wishing to undertake any scholarship or research work, whether suspended or honorary, are required to put their case in writing to their supervisor. This must detail the relevance of the work proposed to the student's PhD study and also the type of supervision and any training that will be received whilst on the scheme.

**Employment**

ESRC Studentship Award holders are encouraged to undertake a certain amount of paid teaching or other research work during their studentship provided that they spend a minimum of 1800 hours each academic year on their doctoral research and research training. Their programme of postgraduate training must be compatible with such work and their supervisor must approve.

Please note that the figure of 1800 is based on recommendations about the difference between full and part-time. It equates to a 37.5 hour week for 48 weeks. You should note that ESRC allows for 8 weeks holiday per year and when this is taken into account, reduces the 1800 hours figure to 1,650.

The ESRC is supportive of their students undertaking demonstration, teaching and other duties in their department, where these do not interfere with the progress of their research degrees. However, Research Council stipends are training awards and do not cover remuneration for duties which would reasonably be considered to constitute employment. Where Research Council students undertake demonstration or teaching, or other types of employment in a Research Organisation, they should be paid for this in addition to receiving the minimum ESRC stipend.

Further to this, demonstrating, teaching, or other types of employment, should not be a compulsory element of research training, and Research Organisations should seek to provide a range of development opportunities for their students.

In coming to this decision, the Council considered the following:

(i) a stipend is a tax-free award for the purposes of undertaking a period of education and training. Income earned from employment duties is taxable in the normal way,

(ii) the Council would expect to see the contribution of research students to demonstration or teaching work formally recognised and recorded as employment by an Research Organisation, with appropriate contractual obligations and training, and

(iii) research students should be given information about their entitlements and responsibilities in undertaking a postgraduate research programme at the outset of their studies.

Students may undertake a small amount of other paid work either in term time or vacation. The ESRC does not, however, encourage such work especially during the times when they are expected to be engaged fully in research training and thesis preparation.

Full-time ESRC studentship award holders cannot also hold either a full-time job, or a permanent part-time job, during the period of their award.

A part-time student cannot be permitted to change employment during the course of their award, so that their new employer is the same degree awarding body at which they taking their PhD.

If a part-time student wishes to suspend their award for a period because of a temporary employment opportunity which is relevant to their area of research, the maximum period of suspension will be based on whether the employment is full or part-time. Therefore the normal maximum suspension of 12 months will apply if the employment is full-time but may be calculated on a pro-rata basis if the employment is part-time. Please see the section on change in status for part time students.

**Holidays**

Full-time students are allowed up to eight weeks holidays (including public holidays) each academic year as approved by their supervisor.

If a studentship covers a period of less than 12 months in any academic year, a student's holiday entitlement will be reduced on a pro rata basis.

**Complaints and Appeals**

The ESRC is committed to high standards of service in all its operations, explained in our Service First Statement.

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/Disabled](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Disabled) people/EducationAndTraining/Higher Education /index.htm

Despite this we recognise that things can sometimes go wrong and we want you to have the opportunity to raise any problems or complaints with us. Any complaint will be taken seriously and treated in the strictest confidence.

**How to make a complaint**

In the first instance we ask you to try to resolve your complaint directly with the person dealing with the issue. If the matter is still not resolved please ask them for the name of their Section Head or contact the relevant Director directly. The Director with responsibility for Postgraduate Training is :

1. • Mr Jeremy Neathey – Jeremy.neathey@esrc.ac.uk.

**If you are still not satisfied**

If your complaint cannot be resolved at Directorate level and you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, or if you wish to complain about one of the Directors, you should contact the Chief Executive:

1. • Professor Jane Elliott Economic and Social Research Council PolarisHouse North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1UJ

**Complaints**

You can make a complaint by letter, fax or email. Please provide the following information to help us deal with it promptly:

• the Directorate or section of ESRC and the name of the staff (if known) involved in your complaint

• a clear description of the nature of the complaint

• an indication whether this is a first complaint or a follow-up to an earlier complaint which has not been resolved satisfactorily

• your full contact details including a telephone number, fax and email address if you have them.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within five working days and will aim to provide a full response within 15 working days. Where a full response is not possible within that time, we will send you a letter outlining progress and setting a target, usually within a further 15 working days, by which a full response will be made.

A complaint may relate to:

• failure to follow stated policies or procedures;

• unreasonable delay or inefficiency in responding to an enquiry, or our operating procedures;

• unhelpful or insensitive attitude of an ESRC employee.

Please note that the following types of complaints are excluded from this complaints procedure:

• complaints which involve a disagreement with a decision of Council or one of its Committees, or the advice of one of its advisory groups

• matters which are the subject of legal proceedings.

The number of complaints received will be monitored and published annually in the ESRC Annual Report.

**Appeals**

The ESRC has appeals procedures which can be followed in the event of disagreement with funding or evaluation decisions. An appeal is defined as a request to vary a decision of the ESRC in light of available facts. Appeals may not be made against the judgements of ESRC Committees, Panels or other bodies taken under due procedures, unless it is argued that the judgement is perverse or that due procedure has not been followed. An appeal may be accompanied or succeeded by a complaint, but individuals making appeals against ESRC decisions should indicate separately in writing if they also wish to make a complaint.

Complaints and appeals will also be distinguished from critical comments. The last will not be treated as a complaint or appeal unless formally reported as such to the appropriate Director.

Appeals relating to studentship allocations are dealt with under a separate procedure and should be addressed to the Appeals Officer, Policy and Resources Directorate.

Appeals against a decision should be made, through the student’s Research Organisation to the ESRC*.* The ESRC will first satisfy itself that the correct procedures have been strictly followed. In any matter of discretion, the ruling of the Council is final.

**Student grievance procedure**

In the event of a student experiencing serious problems with supervision or any other academic matter that cannot be resolved at the department level they should follow the usual Research Organisational grievance procedure. If the grievance is still not resolved, the ESRC advices that the matter be taking to the Ombudsman.

**Ombudsman**

If you have gone through our complaints procedure and remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have the right to refer the matter to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman). You will have to make your complaint to the Ombudsman through your local Member of Parliament.

If you have any suggestions to help us improve our service or questions about our complaints procedure please contact:

1. • Michelle Dodson Economic and Social Research Council Polaris House North Star Avenue Swindon SN2 1UJ
2. Email: [michelle.dodson@esrc.ac.uk](mailto:michelle.dodson@esrc.ac.uk)
3. Telephone: 01793 444357 Fax: 01793 413053