Statement of Expectations for Postgraduate Training

The ambitions of UKRI and the other funders[1] who endorse this 'Statement of Expectations for Postgraduate Training' are to continue to develop highly skilled researchers to achieve impact across the whole economy, as well as developing the next generation of researchers to maintain national capability. Doctoral training is supported through a number of mechanisms; however the principles set out below apply to all students irrespective of mechanism.

Expectations on Research Organisations

- Research Organisations should undertake open, merit-based and transparent recruitment of students, selecting candidate(s) regardless of background or any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act (2010).
- Research Organisations should implement a training strategy which is in line with the Organisation's research strategy and in synergy with the funders' strategic objectives.
- The emphasis should be on enhancing the excellence and quality of doctoral training (rather than maximising student numbers).
- A robust process should be in place to attract and recruit outstanding quality applicants.
- Collaboration with Business, Government and Third Sector Organizations should be strongly encouraged, where appropriate.
- Research Organisations should report as required[2]:
  - For UKRI-funded studentships, this will be by providing information on students (including diversity monitoring data) and their training programmes through the Je-S Student Details for inclusion in UKRI's Management Information Systems.
  - For other endorsing funders' studentships, reporting should be carried out as instructed in grant terms and conditions.
- Students should be aware of which organisations provide their funding, and be familiar with those organisation's strategic objectives. Funder support should be acknowledged on any publications or any other form of dissemination arising from their PhD.

Expectations of the Training Environment

- Research Organisations are expected to provide excellent standards of supervision, management and mentoring[3]. Supervisors should receive the support and training that they individually need to provide the highest-quality supervisory support to their students, and be aware of their responsibilities

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[1] The Wellcome Trust, Cancer Research UK, British Heart Foundation

[2] Additional reporting may be required for particular schemes; any such bespoke reporting will be described in detail in correspondence between the Research Organisation and the relevant funder.

[3] Research Organisations should adopt the principles, standards and good practice for management of research staff as set out in the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. The Research Organisation is responsible for implementing the requirements of the QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards.

under the Equality Act (2010) to treat all students in a fair, open and non-discriminatory manner.

- Career advice should be provided (both prior to embarking on a Doctorate and ongoing) to enable students to choose the most appropriate type of Doctorate and have the confidence and skills to explore the impact they can have in a wide range of relevant sectors and so manage their careers.
- Students enter doctoral programmes with a diverse range of skills and experience. Research Organisations should have mechanisms in place to assess and monitor individual student needs and put in place appropriate development opportunities. The provision of training should be kept as flexible as possible allowing customisation to suit the individual needs of students (and the research area).
- Students should receive in-depth advanced training, as well as developing a broad understanding of their subject area. They should also develop an understanding of how their research fits into the broader "research and innovation system" and of practicable routes to maximising economic, social and/or health impact.
- Funders who endorse this Statement expect the provision of transferable skills to form a fundamental part of doctoral training[4].
- Students should receive training in the principles of good research conduct in their discipline, and understand how to comply with relevant ethical, legal and professional frameworks[5]. Students should be provided with training to identify and challenge unintentional bias as appropriate to their studies.
- Students should receive training in experimental design and statistics appropriate to their disciplines and in the importance of ensuring research results are robust and reproducible.
- Students should, wherever possible, benefit from the advantages of being developed as part of a broader peer group (e.g. through cohort approaches and Graduate schools).
- Students should be encouraged to consider the wider context of their research area, particularly in reference to societal and ethical issues, and the importance of engaging the public with research. Learning and training opportunities should be provided to help develop their public engagement skills[6].
- Research organisations are expected to provide an environment where research students have the opportunity to widen their horizons as part of their training. Experiences outside the "home" Research Organisation, for example with other academic collaborators, in non-academic environments or overseas are encouraged where it fits with the individual and scope of the project. These should be well planned to ensure the student gains maximum benefit.
- Supervisors should recognise doctoral study as a wider training opportunity and encourage and support students in developing their careers.

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[4] Research Organisations should use the Researcher Development Statement to underpin their professional development programmes for students.

[5] For further information regarding the expectations on Research Organisations, see The Concordat to Support Research Integrity (http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/TheConcordatToSupportResearchIntegrity.pdf) and the RCUK Policy and Code of Conduct on the Governance of Good Research Conduct (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/Pages.grc.aspx)

[6] Further information, guidance and advice on public engagement with research can be found on the following websites: National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/) and RCUK Public Engagement with Research (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/pe/public-engagement-with-research-strategy/)

Expectations of the Students

- Students should be actively involved in managing and directing their research project and training, taking advice from their supervisor.
- Students will be expected to develop the higher-level capabilities as outlined in the Researcher Development Statement[7].
- Where students get the opportunity to work in a non-academic environment, they should maximise the opportunity by seeking to understand the role of research within the organisation and the wider context.
- Students are expected to participate in training and networking opportunities provided by the funding body.
- Students should complete all information/reporting requests from the funding provider and ensure contact details are maintained.

Expectations of Collaborators

- The collaborating organisation and academic partner should undertake to develop a research project of the same difficulty and challenge to a conventional PhD programme.
- The partners should maximise the quality of the training experience for the student by recognising the broader training and development opportunities which are available through working in academic and non-academic environments.
- Collaborators are encouraged to promote their involvement with both the Research Organisation and funding body, both internally and externally.
- Research Councils expect the Research Organisation and collaborating organisation to have an agreement in place before the project begins, which recognises the student's contribution, to make sure that the IP arising from the research / training can be managed effectively.

Funders will

- Harmonise terms, conditions and guidance around postgraduate training, where practical, whilst recognising there may be valid subject specific or funder-specific reasons for different approaches in some instances.
- Discuss and evaluate recruitment strategy and processes, and postgraduate training approaches at Departmental (or equivalent) and Institutional level on visits and through formal assurance mechanisms, as required.

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[7] See www.vitae.ac.uk for more details.