

Doctoral College Studentships – Guidance Notes

These guidance notes are for the Doctoral College Studentship Awards (DCSA3), the Vice Chancellor's Award, the Fee Scholarship and Fee Reduction awards.

General Notes on completing the Funding Application Form

- You will need to make two separate applications: an online application for a place on a Surrey PhD Programme and a Funding Application form.
- Please note that you need to apply for a place on a Surrey PhD programme by 10:00 GMT on **Friday 11th January 2019**.
- You can access the online application via the programme page for the PhD that you wish to study. See list of PhDs available on the [PhD programmes page](#).
- The completed Funding Application form should be returned to phdstudentships@surrey.ac.uk by 10:00 GMT on **Friday 11th January 2019**.
- You will be assessed in terms of your fee status when you apply online for a place on the PhD programme. Please see the [Classification of Students](#) webpage for further details. You may be sent a fee status questionnaire to establish your fee status after you have completed your Surrey online application.
- The Funding Application form should be completed by the applicant in conjunction with their proposed supervisor(s).
- If you have a project partner or collaborator, external to the University of Surrey, then please ensure you include a letter of support from them confirming their commitment to the studentship, if successful.
- Any additional information submitted with the application (for example personal statement or covering letter) will be removed prior to assessment.
- For queries with regards to the studentships please contact phdstudentships@surrey.ac.uk
- For queries regarding your online application please contact admissions@surrey.ac.uk

Guidance Notes on Section 1: Personal and Programme Details

Faculties

FASS: Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. *Any applications from the Department of Higher Education should apply via FASS.*

FEPS: Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences

FHMS: Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences

University Number

In order to be eligible for this funding you must apply via the University of Surrey's online applications system by 12 midday, Monday 3rd December 2018. You can access the online application via the programme page for the PhD that you wish to study. See the link below for PhD programmes at Surrey:

<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/postgraduate/research>

Once you have done your online application you will be sent an email with your University Number. If you do not receive this email then firstly check your junk email folder. You can contact Admissions on: admissions@surrey.ac.uk if you have any problems with the online application process.

Email Address

Please provide a current email address that you check regularly as this will be the primary means of communication with regards to the progress of your application and the outcome of the competition.

Mode of Study

Please indicate whether you will be studying Full Time or Part Time.

Duration of PhD

Most PhDs will involve 3 years of full-time study. Please note that the maximum period of funded registration for a part time student is 6 years at 50% for completion of a PhD.

Type of Funding applied for

The options available to you will be dependent on your fee status. Those with UK/EU fee status may only apply for the Doctoral College Studentship Award 3. Those with International fee status may either apply for the Vice Chancellor's Award, Fee Scholarship or Fee Reduction award.

- Doctoral College Studentship Award 3 (UK/EU only) – Full fee Waiver, £15,000 stipend, a Research Training Support Grant of £500 and financial support for research materials and consumables (if successfully applied for) up to the value of £1,000
- Vice Chancellor's Studentship Award (International only) - Full fee waiver, £15,000 stipend and a Research Training Support Grant of £1,000 and financial support for research materials and consumables (if successfully applied for) up to the value of £2,000
- Fee Scholarship (International only) – Reduction of tuition fee to UK/EU rate
- 25% Partial Fee Scholarship (International only) – 25% discount on tuition fee

Guidance Notes on Section 2: Supervision

Please give details of your supervisory team. You must have at least two academic supervisors from the University of Surrey.

The Doctoral College encourages involvement of Early Career Researchers, from the University of Surrey, on supervisory teams.

Please note there is a word limit of 250.

This section of your proposal will be assessed against the following criteria:

Evidence of the suitability of the proposed supervision and training. This will take into account the expertise and relevance of the supervisors' research areas in relation to the proposed project, the individual roles of the supervisory team, how the particular knowledge of the supervisors works in conjunction for the synergetic support of the student's project, and the strength of the proposed supervisory structure.

Examples of assessable factors include:

- Expertise of Primary Supervisor in terms of subject and relevant methodology
- Specific role of Primary Supervisor: why only s/he can supervise this project
- Relevance and role of additional supervisors, synergies between them and if any supervisor is not a permanent member of staff please provide information about how supervision will be maintained over the registration period.
- Additional factors giving confidence in supervision and research environment: collaborations, funded research programme, risk mitigation
- Supervision load of the primary supervisor i.e., how many full-time, part-time and continuing PGRs (supervisors should quote this in application form, under 'Supervision arrangements'.)

Guidance Notes on Section 3: Educational Experience

If you have more than one qualification at the same level, please provide details of all those relevant to this application.

Guidance Notes on Section 4: Professional Experience

Provide information about any employment, work or professional experience (research and /or practice-based) that is relevant to your proposed programme of study and will therefore strengthen your application. Please use the space provided and do not attach additional pages.

Guidance Notes on Section 5: Personal Statement

Please note there is a word limit of 250-500. This section of your proposal will be assessed against the following criteria:

Evidence that the applicant is well-prepared for his/her proposed research and future career. This will be based on the applicant's description of how his/her previous experience (academic and professional) has prepared him/her for doctoral-level research. The assessors will be looking for evidence of the applicant's performance at undergraduate and, where relevant, postgraduate level, and of any relevant professional experience. They will also be looking at how the programme will contribute to the applicant's long-term career aims. Reference will be made to degree transcripts, individual module marks, degree results, and any research outputs or prizes.

Examples of assessable factors include:

- Results in highest academic degree
- Strength of any project mark
- Prizes, other marks of esteem, exceptional references
- Evidence of research potential (publications, patents, conference presentation, etc.).
- Relevant research/work experience (industry placements or internships)

Guidance Notes on Section 6: The Research Project Proposal

This section is key to your application. You should discuss the content with your proposed supervisor(s). Use clear and concise language, avoiding jargon. Bear in mind that the members of the Selection Panel may not all be experts in your particular specialist field: you should write your project proposal with this audience in mind, not your proposed supervisor.

Please note there is a word limit of 500-1,000 (including references to academic literature).

This section of your proposal will be assessed against the following criteria:

Evidence of the quality and feasibility of the project proposal. The assessors will be looking for evidence of a well-articulated research project, a coherent and well thought-out plan for doctoral study, and a good awareness of the place of the research within the current field.

Examples of assessable factors include:

- Context: importance and specific contribution of project
- Timeliness and specificity: why now? why here?
- Clear objectives with identified outcomes
- Methodology that is specific, non-trivial, realistic
- Study plan that is realistic, specific, considers constraints, and exhibits correct timescale

Guidance Notes on Section 7: University Research Strategy

Further detail on the Grand Challenges at the University of Surrey can be found here:

<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/research/vision/grand-challenges-research>

Please note there is a word limit of 350.

This section of your proposal will be assessed against the following criteria:

University Research Strategy: This will take into account the extent to which the project and student are aligned with the University's Research Strategy, in particular how the work will contribute to addressing the Grand Challenges and how it is envisioned that research will be impactful.

Examples of assessable factors include:

- Impact is identified, quantified and assessed
- Strength of research outputs (with regards to REF and global competitiveness)
- Fit to strategy of University, Department or Research Centre
- Relation to external or international research priorities
- Benefits this project will bring to the University, Department or Research Centre

Guidance Notes on Section 8: Details of Project Partners and Collaborators

Collaborating partners can be private sector companies, public sector bodies or voluntary organisations. All collaborating partners should normally have an operating base within the UK in order to ensure that the student can be practically supported and supervised as well as being based within the organisation for part of the studentship. They provide PhD students with the opportunity to gain experience of work outside an academic environment. A key contact or company supervisor should be identified, this is in addition to the academic supervisory team from the University. The partner organisation can make a financial contribution as cash or as an "in kind contribution" towards any element of the PhD. The collaboration must be a genuine two-way collaboration and this section should seek to demonstrate this as well as clarify the practical aspects of the collaboration. If you have more than one project partner please include details of all collaborators.

A letter of support from the collaborating organisation(s) confirming their commitment to the studentship, if successful, is required.

This section of your proposal will be assessed against the following criteria.

Collaboration. Priority will be given to projects that involve a collaboration with a non-HEI* partner. In particular, the panel will favour applications involving matched or part-funding arrangements with external collaborators. The strength of the supervisory support from the project partner may also be taken into consideration.

**Higher Education Institution*

Examples of assessable factors include:

- Scope, nature and rationale of collaboration (e.g. international or national, non-HEI or HEI)
- Financial contribution to research costs (consumables, travel, etc.)
- Financial contribution to maintenance cost and fees
- In-kind support, e.g. access to facilities, equipment and external co-supervision
- Multi-disciplinary or boundary-crossing aspects
- Overall value added by collaboration

Guidance Notes on Section 9: Applicant's declaration

Please sign and date the form confirming that the information provided is complete and accurate. Electronic signatures are acceptable. Primary and Secondary supervisors will also be required to sign and date the form.

Checklist

- Submit your Online Application by **12 midday, Monday 3rd December 2018**.
- Send your Application Form to phdstudentships@surrey.ac.uk by **10GMT on Friday 11th January 2019**.

Next Steps

We will contact you with the result of your funding outcome as soon as possible. If you have any queries please contact phdstudentships@surrey.ac.uk