

# Guidelines for Governance and Standard Operating Procedures: Scottish Universities Partnership for Environmental Research Doctoral Training Partnership (SUPER DTP: Grant reference number NE/S007342/1).

## Preface

The purpose of this document is to provide a reference source that, in conjunction with the SUPER DTP Collaboration Agreement, will cover the governance, administration, and management of the SUPER DTP.

## Disclaimer

The contents of this document and associated files are presented in good faith, based on the material available, and should not be treated as legal advice. The authors of this document either as individuals or the University of St Andrews, are not responsible for the way that the information or data provided herein is used and can accept no liability in negligence or otherwise to those who rely directly or indirectly on information provided in this document. The information provided is simply a guide.

## Document History

<b>Revision History</b>			
<b>Version/File Name</b>	<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
SUPER SOP_V1	Sept 2019	MAJ/ECD	Initial Release
SUPER SOP_V2	Nov 2019	MAJ/ECD	Finance information updated
SUPER SOP_V3	Nov 2019	ECD	Internship section added
SUPER SOP_V4	Jan 2020	ECD	Student-led proposals information added to application process section, equality and diversity section added
SUPER SOP_V5	Feb 2020	ECD	Added information about the application process to use the 10% international student quota
SUPER SOP_V6	Aug 2020	MAJ	Information on Moderating Panel Added and qualification regarding face to face meeting requirements subject to travel and meeting restrictions.
SUPER SOP_V7	May 2023	BA/ECD	Update to PG Cert cost in TSG. Addition of Termination of Studies guidance.
SUPER SOP_V8	Aug 2023	ECD	Update of risk register (annex 7); update of general principles of financial management; update of figures in Tables 2 and 3
Super SOP_V9	Sept 2023	ECD	Addition of international quota detail added to page 16; Link to wellbeing webpage added (page 21); UKRI web link added for reporting project outcomes (page 22); DEI webpage link added (page 26); UKRI web link added for publishing your research findings (page 27);

Super SOP_V10	Oct/Nov 2023	ECD	Amendment of international quota percentage on page 15; note added to page 24 regarding use of funds outside of funded period; general check of document completed
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#### Contacts

Correspondence Address:	SUPER DTP Secretariat Scottish Oceans Institute East Sands St Andrews Fife, KY16 8LB Scotland, UK	Telephone: Email:	+44 (0) 1334 467200 superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk
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Website:	<a href="https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/">https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/</a>
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## Definitions and Abbreviations

**ASM** – Annual Science Meeting

**DTP** – Doctoral Training Partnership

**EC** – Executive Committee

**FES** – Financial Expenditure Statement

**HEI** – Higher Education Institute

**IES** – Interim Expenditure Statement

**Je-S** – Joint Electronic Submission

**PGRs** – Postgraduate Researchers

**MASTS** – Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland

**NERC** – Natural Environment Research Council

**RTSG** – Research Training Support Grant

**SLO** – Strategic Learning Outcome

**SUPER** – Scottish Universities Partnership for Environmental Research

**TAP** – Theme Advisory Panel

**TNA** – Training Needs Analysis

**Secretariat** – those individuals contracted to undertake and perform the administrative tasks associated with the day-to-day management and operation of the SUPER DTP

**SLO** – Anticipated and Strategic Learning Outcomes

## Introduction to SUPER

The SUPER DTP is built around a well-established collaborative group of universities delivering world-leading research in natural environmental science. Each SUPER partner is a member of the Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS), a higher education pool established in 2009, whose research and training collaborations address cutting-edge scientific challenges across the NERC remit in topics as diverse as environmental physics and chemistry, biodiversity, global change, and mathematical modelling of populations and ecosystems.

The SUPER DTP addresses a “catchment to coast” research portfolio supporting the holistic study of the ecological dynamics of systems from headland rivers and catchments through lowland regions and riparian systems to estuarine and coastal waters and marine ecosystems. The themes under the SUPER “Catchment to Coast” umbrella are:

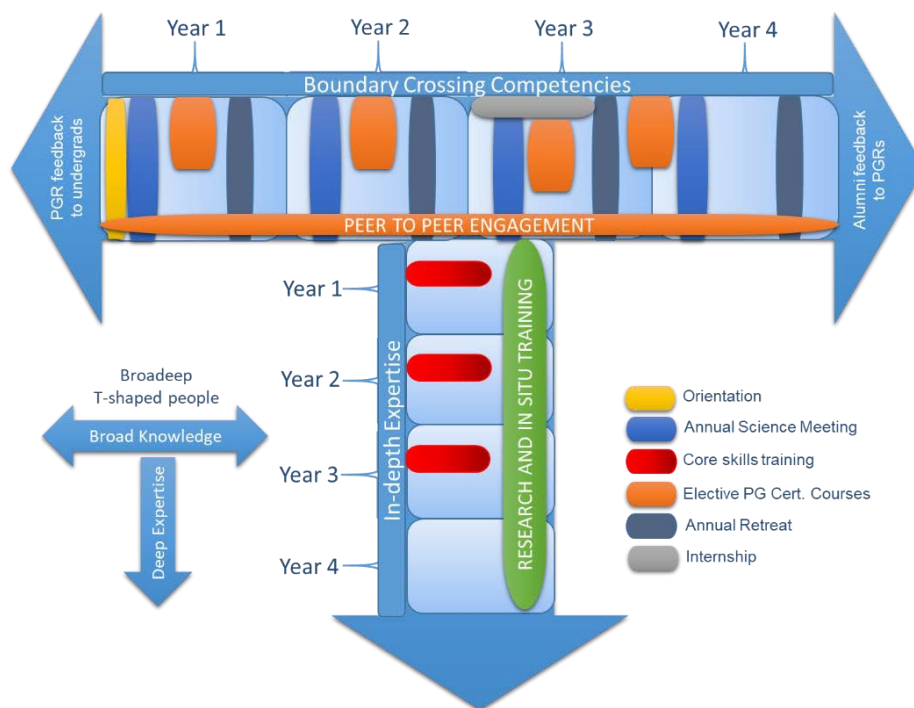
- Environmental dynamics: hydrology, sedimentology, oceanography, erosion control, ecosystem engineering, river ecology and flood management;
- Biodiversity: ecosystem function and services, biodiversity and conservation;
- Challenged ecosystems: climate, pollution, resilience, resource management, societal well-being.

SUPER will capitalize on scientific excellence across this wide swathe of the NERC remit, focusing on multi-institutional, cross-disciplinary, and interdisciplinary doctoral research. An ethos of inter-institutional support and shared training will underpin the DTP, supported by the Postgraduate Certificate in Researcher Professional Development (PGCert).

SUPER PGRs are spread across eight geographically dispersed Scottish HEIs (St Andrews, Stirling, Edinburgh Napier, Heriot Watt, Strathclyde, Aberdeen, UHI, and West of Scotland). SUPER will use joint meetings, social media, internships, small projects, and scientific visits to emphasise the value of the network and promote inter-institutional cooperation (including joint degrees).

The SUPER Executive and Graduate School Dean will ensure all PGRs understand from the outset that they are well-supported, regularly reviewed, and part of a vibrant community, linked to a powerful network that has grown in strength over the last decade.

SUPER training will be interdisciplinary and follow the “T-shaped” approach to professional development (Fig 1), combining dedication to an area of research supported by translational and life skills that provide a platform for future development and employment in research, government, and industry. Formalised in our innovative PGCert programme, our PGRs will gain formal accreditation for the broad spectrum of research training and experiential learning. The PG Cert will ensure that SUPER DTP PGRs stand out in experience and formalise what doctoral training can deliver for both the student and wider society. We recognise all our PGRs as individuals and take pride in offering them a truly flexible and outstanding doctoral experience.



**Figure 1:** The SUPER approach to “T-shaped” development of postgraduate training.

## NERC Training Ethos

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) supports training of the postgraduates it funds to ensure that they are equipped with the technical, professional, and personal skills to enable them to succeed in their careers, whether they choose to continue in environmental science or not. NERC’s postgraduate training aims to provide a wide range of skills that will be appropriate for a variety of careers, including but not limited to careers in higher education (HE), industry, government, or other sectors. NERC believes that a supply of technically able, skilled, and experienced graduates will enable the UK’s increasingly technology and knowledge-based economy to grow and adapt to the demands and challenges of a changing world. Its postgraduate training aims to ensure that the next generation of leaders in the environmental sector are equipped with these skills and experiences. It currently invests around £25m per year in postgraduate training, supporting nearly 1000 PhD students in universities and research institutes at any one time. During their PhD studentships, NERC encourages its PGRs to undertake training in transferable skills such as communication, project management, media engagement, policy awareness and enterprise, as well as research techniques.

## Governance Structure

The SUPER DTP Secretariat and administration is based in the University of St Andrews. This is the organisation that receives the NERC contribution to studentship funding. The Secretariat will be the main point of contact between NERC and the DTP and will operate through the institution leading the DTP.

## SUPER DTP Secretariat

The Secretariat, consisting of the Dean of Graduate School, Deputy Dean, and SUPER DTP Coordinator, will be led by the DTP Director (Professor David M Paterson). The Dean deals with progress review,

considers training needs, provides some pastoral support, mediates where appropriate, and supports the Director. Additional services will be secured through *ad hoc* procurement and defined in-kind contributions (staff time and resources) from SUPER members. The DTP operational budget is based on a combination of staff time allocated and costed to the MASTS Directorate of which the Secretariat is already a part, together with defined contributions to operational costs made on a per studentship basis by those DTP partners who successfully bid for studentships.

#### Executive Committee

The SUPER Executive Committee (EC) holds ultimate decision-making responsibility for the SUPER DTP and is responsible with the Director, together with the Secretariat for day-to-day operations. The EC is responsible for reporting to NERC through the Director. The EC consists of one senior subject-relevant member of staff representing their respective HEI DTP partner institution. It may also include a representative of the Theme Advisory Panel. In addition, three Advisory Members drawn from government, industry, and an independent member may be invited to join the EC. The EC is Chaired by the Director or an agreed alternate in his absence.

#### Executive Committee Terms of Reference

In line with the stated vision and scope for the SUPER DTP, the EC will:

1. Work collegiately to ensure that the DTP upholds the highest standards of research excellence and training.
2. Maintain general oversight of the operation of the Secretariat and provide guidance on the delivery of DTP functions.
3. Help to ensure the fair and transparent allocation of studentships based upon scientific merit and quality of both projects and PGRs.
4. Consider and take decisions based on the advice and recommendations provided by the Theme Advisory Panel and the Proposal Assessment Panels.
5. Promote the DTP within their respective organisations and networks.
6. Act as the primary link and point of contact between their host organisations and the Secretariat.
7. Regularly review the risks that may impact on the performance or delivery of the DTP.

#### Appointment process

It is expected that all Partner HEIs in the SUPER DTP will nominate a representative (and, where required, a named alternate) to sit on the EC.

#### Expected time commitment

EC members are required to commit up to four days per year to this role.

#### Period of Tenure

EC members may serve for the duration of the SUPER DTP, subject to the approval of the institutions they represent. Regular attendance of and contribution to DTP EC meetings is expected and the Director is at liberty to request alternate representation from an institution if their chosen representative fails to participate in EC meetings to the extent that, in the Director's judgement, detracts from the functioning of the EC.

#### Mode of operation

The EC will be required to attend at least one meeting per year. The purpose of this meeting will be to review the progress of the DTP over the previous year and initiate any changes required to the delivery of the DTP for the following year. In addition, the EC may be asked to formally sign off on any specific



NERC reporting requirements. Other meetings will be conducted online as required. This may include a meeting dedicated to the review and ratification of studentship proposal rankings recommended by the Moderating Panel and/or a meeting to consider the recommendations of the Theme Advisory Panel with respect to the DTPs strategy and a review of training needs and opportunities.

#### Conflict of Interest

All EC members will be required to declare any conflict of interest related to their remit and role within the SUPER DTP.

#### Theme Advisory Panel

The Theme Advisory Panel (TAP) will inform DTP capacity building, training, and research strategy, and take ownership of the DTPs strategic framework. The TAP members may be populated by up to six HEI technical experts and four individuals drawn from the user community identified through consultation with our key stakeholders. A list of current key stakeholders and end users can be found in Annex 1.

The remit of the TAP will be to provide advice and make recommendations to the EC through the Secretariat.

#### Theme Advisory Panel Terms of Reference

In line with the stated vision and scope for the SUPER DTP, the TAP will:

1. Reflect at a strategic level on the research requirements and potential areas of research priority as they apply to the three theme areas of SUPER. This process should include reference to any relevant strategies or documented evidence in support of TAP advice or recommendations.
2. Seek to identify areas where strategic focus for research may be required and where the DTP may increase its impact through the clustering of studentship projects.
3. Seek to identify potential skills gaps which DTP studentships and advanced training could address.
4. Provide comment and advice on the training aspects of the DTP.

#### Appointment process

The SUPER DTP Secretariat will issue a call for nominations for the Theme Advisory Panel (TAP). Applicants can self-nominate. Applicants will be required to complete a brief nomination form, which will provide information on their credentials. Nominees will also be required to indicate which of the SUPER DTP Theme areas they wish to identify with: Environmental dynamics, Biodiversity or Challenged ecosystems.

All nominations will be presented to the EC independently and they will be asked to vote in ranked order for their preferred candidates. Based on the outcome of this election, the successful nominees will be notified to the EC for final ratification of the outcome of the election. The candidates will be informed of the outcome accordingly.

#### Expected time commitment

TAP members will be required to commit up to a maximum of two days per year to this role.

#### Period of Tenure

TAP members will serve for two years from the date of appointment in the first instance, with the potential for a further year subject to the approval of the EC. The members of the TAP will, from within

their number, seek nominations for, and elect a Chair who will be asked to represent the TAP at relevant EC meetings.

#### Mode of operation

The TAP will be required to attend one meeting per year (generally online). This meeting will be to discuss the overarching research strategy for the DTP and to draft advice and recommendations for the next call for studentship proposals. This meeting will take place in April/May each year with it in mind that the call for studentship proposal will be issued in July of each year.

Other meetings may be conducted online as required (e.g., to focus on training aspects). The Secretariat will organise and minute meetings of the TAP. Reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be reimbursed for attendance of any face-to-face meeting.

#### Conflict of Interest

All TAP members will be required to declare any conflict of interest related to their remit and role within the SUPER DTP.

### SUPER Proposal Assessment Moderating Panel

#### Context

Proposals submitted to the SUPER DTP are assessed by three independent reviewers. They provide structured scores and comments related to proposals and are requested to make an overall judgement on whether they recommend that a proposal should be supported or rejected. Proposals are then ranked based on a summation of the overall recommendations of all three reviewers and then sub-ranked by total scores allocated. A Moderating Panel will be convened to provide overview of the proposal rankings.

#### Moderating Panel Terms of Reference

##### *Moderating Panel Membership and decision making*

1. The Moderating Panel will be Chaired by the Director or his alternate and its members appointed from within the wider SUPER community.
2. The Panel will consist of no more than four members plus the Chair and the members will be appointed annually.
3. No member shall serve more than one year consecutively.
4. Each SUPER DTP member institution can only have one member at any time.
5. The selection of Moderating Panel members should seek to rotate the Panel membership to include representatives of all member institutions.
6. Moderating Panel members cannot be party to any of the proposals under review. Any potential conflicts of interest must be declared in advance and the conflicted member must be excluded from the Panel meeting.

#### Conduct

Panel members must treat the information verbally, hard copy, or electronically communicated in relation to their role as confidential.

#### Quorum

For the Panel to be quorate at least three members must be present including the Chair or their alternate.

#### Remit

The remit of the Moderating Panel is not to overturn the overall selection of proposals.

The Panel should:

1. Take a view on the overall process and provide comment on that basis and on the understanding that unless there is a significant shortfall the process should stand unaltered.
2. Focus its attention on those proposals that sit immediately either side of the agreed funding cut off and assess whether there is any need to consider adjusting rankings based on a detailed assessment of the reviewers' comments and scores.
3. Where most of the Panel consider that these rankings should be changed, a clear rationale for this decision must be recorded.
4. Not seek to secure additional reviewers comments at this stage.

### Decision-making

The Chair will encourage decision making by seeking consensus. If a vote is required, the majority will carry a decision and, in the event of a split vote, the Chair has a casting vote.

### Timing and format of meetings

A Panel Meeting must take place as soon as possible after the finalisation of the review rankings either face-to-face or online. The meeting will be formally minuted.

### Reporting

The Panel will report to the EC. Their meeting report and recommendations will be presented in advance of the EC ratifying the final ranking of the proposals to be supported in any given funding round.

### Student Committee

The Graduate School Student Committee (GSSC) will communicate with the EC, via the Dean and/or Deputy Dean, regarding the overall (non-Thematic) operation and conduct of the DTP. The GSSC will consist of up to eight members plus a Chair, elected by the student body. Being an active party to the Governance and the delivery of the DTP's operational requirements will be considered as a credit bearing activity within the context of the PGCert. PGRs will be encouraged to take part in organising aspects of the Annual Student Retreat and Annual Science Meeting, which provide additional credit bearing opportunities. A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) sub-group may advise on specific matters relating to this agenda.

### Cycle of Operations

An annual cycle of DTP operations will be established using successful practices already developed by MASTS (see Annex 2) to ensure the timely and efficient delivery of DTP activities.

### NERC Universal Studentship Acceptance Deadline

All NERC-funded DTPs have agreed to adhere to an annual universal acceptance deadline for PhD studentship offers. The deadline for offers falls on the **third Wednesday of March each year**. Any offer made should include details of the universal acceptance deadline for that year.

The purpose of the annual universal acceptance deadline is to ensure that PhD applicants who have applied for multiple studentship opportunities, and may therefore receive multiple offers, do not have to decide on the studentship they wish to accept before knowing the outcome of all their applications. Applicants who receive a PhD studentship offer from a NERC DTP for the forthcoming academic year are therefore not required to accept an offer formally before this date unless they wish to do so.

The SUPER DTP annual cycle of operation is designed to meet the universal studentship acceptance deadline. To ensure that appointment processes and studentship start dates are harmonised across the DTP, the Secretariat will track the recruitment process. All student cohorts will, as far as possible, be appointed on the same date annually and in advance of the MASTS Annual Science Meeting (ASM) which takes place in the autumn. The SUPER DTP will be fully integrated into the MASTS ASM giving students unparalleled opportunities to engage with peers and establish networks. PGR representatives recruited in previous cohorts will participate in these orientation events to share their experiences with new recruits. Immersion in the ASM which will engage the full spectrum of the DTP stakeholder community will, from the outset, establish the tone and collaborative culture of the DTP for the new PGRs and immediately expose them to important peer groups and contact networks.

### Call for proposals

SUPER operates on the basis that it selects proposed projects and then the HEIs that have been successful in securing *in principle* support for projects, appoint suitable students to undertake these projects.

In late spring of each year, the Secretariat will issue a call to all DTP Collaborating Partners soliciting their priorities for research which could be addressed in the context of a studentship. Collaborating Partners are also invited to indicate their willingness *in principle* to co-fund studentships.

A Theme Advisory Panel (TAP) may also be convened with a view to identifying priorities and gaps that the DTP should be addressing.

In early summer, a call for proposals including feedback from Collaborating Partners and the TAP is issued. The actual call for proposals is published in July with a deadline for submission in September. Application forms, together with guidance and terms and conditions for applicants are made available on the SUPER DTP website: <https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/how-to-apply/>.

Proposals are submitted in electronic form to the Secretariat. All applications are treated as confidential and handled by two designated members of staff only who are responsible for checking the proposals and distributing them to the designated panel of referees.

### Application Process

Subject to agreement from the EC, the Secretariat publishes a call for proposals, inviting eligible supervisors from its partner HEIs; St Andrews, Aberdeen, Edinburgh Napier, Heriot-Watt, Stirling, Strathclyde, UHI, and West of Scotland, to submit proposals by a stated deadline.

For student-led proposals, the prospective PGR needs to identify a potential HEI supervisor, as it is the supervisor that must be the applicant effectively on behalf of the PGR. Before discussing a detailed proposal, the PGR should discuss with the supervisor, how that institution deals with the recruitment of PGRs for student-led proposals. For example, if the proposal was successful, the student may be offered the studentship, with the caveat that they still must undergo a separate interview with the University's postgraduate admissions panel to ensure they are of the required standard. Procedures for student-led proposals may vary between institutions.

All HEI partners agreed that the cost model for all SUPER DTP studentships to be 3.5 years in duration. This assumes that UKRI-NERC pay for a four-year studentship and 6 months equivalent of fees and stipend are retained to cover the costs of running the DTP. All HEI partners also agreed to a funding intervention rate of 33%, which is based on the costs for a four-year studentship. The percentage intervention rate may be lower than this subject to the number of co-sponsoring organisations

contributing funding to the project. In any event, SUPER must remain the highest percentage contribution.

The SUPER DTP is flexible and considers a range of cooperative projects. Individual arrangements can be discussed with the Secretariat on a case-by-case basis. However, the DTP routinely distinguishes three types of studentships:

- Standard PhD Studentship Award (Funding\* - 67% SUPER, 33% HEI).
- CASE PhD Studentship Award (Funding\* - 67% SUPER, 33% HEI – plus CASE award going to HEI/student).
- Collaborative PhD Studentship Award (Funding\* - 50% SUPER, 33% HEI, 17% non-HEI partner) – This could also include a CASE award. If a supervisor can secure more than 33% funds from industry partners, this may be used to offset the HEI partner contribution.

*\*Percentage allocations may be subject to change*

The expectation is that CASE Award partners will be reserved to SMEs, for example, who are unable to contribute significant funds towards a studentship but can offer appropriate access to resources and infrastructure that will make a material contribution. Subject to agreement, some Collaborative studentships may be designated as CASE studentship also, based on the likely access to resources and infrastructure that the collaborating partner is willing to provide.

Non-HEI SUPER DTP Collaborating Partners are invited to suggested areas of research they may be willing to consider. This information, together with any key areas for research highlighted by the TAP will be included as further information in the call for proposals.

Organisations wishing to become Collaborating Partners that are not already named as part to the SUPER DTP are welcomed. Interested parties should contact the Secretariat in the first instance.

#### Basic Terms and Conditions for Applicants

All proposed projects must have a suitably experienced supervisory team and involve co-supervision across two different SUPER Partner HEI institutions. The supervisor from the HEI hosting the PGR will be recognised as the primary supervisor. Primary HEI supervisors without a past record of successful PhD completion must appoint an experienced second HEI supervisor from the host HEI. In this case there will be three supervisors. Additional supervisors can also be appointed from Collaborative partners (e.g., BGS, JHI, SNH, Marine Scotland, SEPA, etc.). Hypothetical combinations of supervisors can be seen below in Table 1.

	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Standard inexperienced</u>	<u>Collaborative</u>	<u>Collaborative inexperienced</u>
<b>Supervisor 1</b>	HEI 1	HEI 1 inexperienced	HEI 1	HEI 1 inexperienced
<b>Supervisor 2</b>	HEI 2	HEI 1 experienced	HEI 2	HEI 1 experienced
<b>Supervisor 3</b>	Optional	HEI 2	Collaborative partner	HEI 2
<b>Supervisor 4+</b>	Optional	Optional	Optional	Collaborative partner

Inexperienced applicants should confirm their eligibility to formally supervise PhD students with their own institutions before they apply. An eligible supervisor can submit more than one proposal, but if both are ranked as supportable, only the highest ranked will be funded. An applicant who submits a proposal(s) as first supervisor may also be involved as secondary/tertiary supervisor in other proposals in the same call round.

Successful primary supervisors in any given round will not be eligible to submit a proposal as a primary supervisor in the subsequent round. They may be secondary supervisors or wait and submit in the following round.

Applications must be submitted by the primary supervisor. Student-initiated proposals are welcome, but they must be submitted by their prospective supervisor(s).

Where possible, PGRs should be jointly registered, and FTEs allocated proportionately.

All PGRs will be expected to participate in two mandatory main cohort-building events per year; the Annual Science Meeting and the Annual Retreat. As a condition of funding, all PGRs must register for the Post Graduate Certificate in Researcher Professional Development (PGCert). PGRs are expected to select further training opportunities relevant to their respective interests and that may contribute to the PGCert.

The individual Research Training & Support Grant (RTSG) awards will help support participation in cohort building events and PG Cert training. The RTSG will be allocated to the student, but a proportion is expected to be used to support PG Cert training.

All studentship positions must be confirmed by the UKRI universal acceptance deadline (confirmed and published as part of the call for proposals). If the studentship is not filled by this date, the position may be re-advertised to secure an appointment within a further three months. Failure to recruit in this timeframe will result in the studentship being re-allocated. SUPER offers PhD studentships for 3.5 years (42 months) including stipend and fees at the RCUK rate (rates announced when provided by UKRI-NERC). Part-time study is also available subject to agreement with the host HEI.

The operational costs and student registration fees for the Graduate School and PG Cert, will be derived from the RCUK studentship award, as agreed by the DTP Partners.

All studentships are ultimately regulated by [UKRI Training Grants Standard Terms and Conditions](#). PGRs are advised to familiarise themselves with this document.

CASE Award studentships are encouraged and welcome, but they must be accompanied by a letter confirming the *in-principle* commitment of the CASE partner. CASE partners are required to supplement the studentship, and thus enhance the research project, by:

- Paying at least £1,000 per year to the lead HEI to supplement the RTSG for the duration of the studentship.
- In addition to the cash contribution above, meeting the extra expenses (such as travel and subsistence) incurred by the student visiting and working in the CASE establishment(s).
- Contributing in cash or in kind towards necessary materials whilst the student is based at the CASE partner establishment(s).

Proposals will be assessed and ranked according to:

- *Quality* - The application represents research of the highest scientific quality.
- *Collaboration* - Evidence is provided that the project will involve a period of research outside of the primary HEI.
- *Approach* - The proposal sets out an approach which is both logical and appropriate to address the stated objectives.
- *Impact* - Evidence is provided that this project will deliver significant outcomes and impact.

- *Feasibility* - The planning and project management of the proposed research project are justified and would be feasible and achievable for a student within 3.5 years.
- *Student focus and PGCert output* – Care has been taken to construct a project that will serve the needs of a student and allow them to develop specific research and transferrable skills.

### Student Appointment

It is the responsibility of the lead HEI to organise the recruitment of students according to their own institutional practices.

It is important to note that the SUPER DTP is only able to allocate up to 30% (previously 10%) of studentships to international (non-UK) students. In addition, the DTP will only provide the equivalent of domestic funding for the studentship and any additional costs associated with appointing international students must be found elsewhere by the appointing HEI. As a guiding principle, the DTP will reserve the allocation of studentships to international students where there is evidence of difficulty in recruiting domestic students.

Any supervisors wishing to apply for this 30% allocation should provide written confirmation that the awarding HEI is willing to waive international fees (or that the fees will be covered by the PGR or from other funds) and must submit a case for the EC or an International Quota sub-panel to consider, about why domestic applicants were unsuitable and why a particular student should be recruited under the 30% quota. The necessary information should be submitted by email to [superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk) by a specified deadline in advance of the coordinated UK DTP universal acceptance date.

### Referee Panel Selection and Proposal Assessment

DTP proposal referees are invited to nominate themselves and to define their areas of expertise and affiliations. Referees are obliged to declare any conflict of interest based on knowledge of the title of the proposal and its authors before they have sight of the full proposal. The Secretariat are responsible for selecting the Proposal Referee Panel(s). Proposal referees are required to abide by a confidentiality agreement (Annex 3) and Conflict of Interest Policy (Annex 4) which they must accept prior to being sent any proposals to review.

A minimum of three referees are independently requested to assess each proposal using a standard scoring template (Annex 5). Every attempt will be made to secure three referees reports for each proposal. The proposals are ranked at two levels: 1. Whether they are *in principle* worthy of support or should be rejected – with the reasons being made explicit; 2. The average total score of all referees.

All proposals will be scored and ranked by the panel of independent referees according to publicly declared criteria. The proposals of the highest rank and within the amount of available funding will, subject to the report of the Proposal Assessment Moderating Panel (see below), be recommended to the EC for support. The EC will consider the recommendations and unless there is any salient reason for rejecting the recommendations, they will confirm the selection of successful proposals.

The Secretariat is responsible for collating the referees scores and creating the ranked table of proposals to be presented to the Proposal Assessment Moderating Panel. The Panel report and recommendations will be presented to the EC in advance of the Committee ratifying the final ranking of the proposals to be supported in any given funding round.

Applicants will be informed as soon as possible of the EC's decision. Any relevant feedback from the referees will be provide to the applicants. The decision is final and the Secretariat will not be responsible for providing any further feedback than that provided by the referees.



Proposals approved by the EC should be advertised openly through [findaphd.com](http://findaphd.com) and partner networks with a set deadline for applications from prospective students. The host HEI(s) will also advertise the studentships in line with their respective policies and practices.

PIs awarded funding for their project have to advertise the studentship opportunity to both home and international students. The SUPER DTP can only recruit 30% of the annual cohort as international students, so any PI wishing to recruit an international student then must apply to SUPER to appoint an international student. PIs awarded funding will be provided with information about how to bid for the international quota, and the deadline for doing so. Only PIs awarded international quota will be able to appoint an international student. If SUPER is oversubscribed for this quota and an application is unsuccessful, the PI will have to appoint a home student.

Prospective supervisors will make a first sift of the student applications for their respective proposals. The DTP will respect each partner HEI's recruitment procedures but may require that the primary supervisor and a member of the TAP, EC, or Secretariat join the interview panel to ensure continuity and fit across the DTP cohort.

It is the responsibility of the lead HEI and the prospective lead supervisor to notify the Secretariat of a studentship appointment as soon as it has been confirmed. In addition, it is the responsibility of the lead HEI and the prospective lead supervisor to notify the Secretariat if they have failed to make an appointment within a 3-month period of receiving notification of funding for the proposal submitted.

The lead HEI will be required to provide information to the Secretariat regarding the number of formal applications received for each studentship funded through the DTP, the number invited for interview, and the number of appointments made. For all applications, anonymised data related to several DEI characteristics will need to be provided by the lead HEI to the Secretariat. The characteristics are gender, age, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation. The Secretariat will provide this collated data to NERC via their annual reporting form.

#### Registering Students

It is the responsibility of the lead HEI to register their PGR on the [Je-S Studentship Details Portal](#). The lead supervisor should ensure that their respective institutions have completed this within one month of the PGR's start date.

#### Termination of Studies

If, after suitable support has been explored, a PGR is not progressing as expected as per institutional policy, then a Termination of Studies can be explored. At least a one-month notice, or timing listed in institutional policy, whichever is longer, should be given to the affected student.

The DTP is expected to take reasonable steps to recover monies that have already been paid to students for the period following the date of leaving or termination. As such, there should not be any financial implications unless funds are provided in advance to the student for the period following the date of leaving or termination and the DTP will take reasonable steps to recover these funds.

If the lead supervisor can secure the additional funds to make up the balance needed, then it may be possible for the studentship to be readvertised as part of the following cycle. Please discuss this potential with the Secretariat.



## Training

### Core training modules

There are currently two compulsory core training modules required to be attended annually by SUPER DTP PGRs; the Annual Science Meeting (ASM), and the residential Annual Student Retreat. Students will only be excused under exceptional circumstances (i.e., where there is an unavoidable clash with fieldwork).

A SUPER DTP Induction event will take place at the ASM and new PGRs are expected to attend. This event will mark the beginning of each cohort year, and will include registration on, and orientation to the PGCert, an introduction to the Secretariat, and an opportunity to engage in the ASM, and the associated networking activities and workshops.

The Retreat takes place in March each year and is a three-day training and networking event. The Retreat will include speakers, presentations, networking, and various training courses. More details of Core Skills Training and its content can be found in Annex 6.

Subject to any possible travel or meeting restrictions, alternative arrangements will be made to ensure that the core training modules are delivered remotely.

### SUPER additional training and activities

In addition to the core programme, SUPER will offer a series of electives designed to develop critical skills for the environmental sector. Details of these will be posted on the SUPER DTP website. PGRs will have access to a wealth of personal and professional development opportunities through our partners, collaborators and networks that can be included in their bespoke PG Cert, programme, working towards specific discipline needs, personal goals, and career aspirations. SUPER partners will share high-quality opportunities across our community providing a breadth of formal and informal training activities in areas aligned to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework<sup>1</sup> and in transferable, discipline specific, technical, numerical and data skills. SUPER will offer additional opportunities from partners and other providers or developed from an identified need highlighted by the PGR Training Needs Analysis (TNA).

### Training Needs Analysis

The amount of training a PGR requires will depend on their pre-existing skills, their research programme and career aspirations. Training can take the form of:

- Advanced research training (e.g., environmental modelling, advanced statistics)
- Continuing Professional Development (e.g., enhancing transferable skills such as presenting, time or project management)
- Careers training (e.g., enhancing employability by CV development, interview techniques, internships)
- Experiential learning (e.g., convening a seminar series, writing a blog, presenting at a conference, demonstrating to undergraduates)

Each PGR will identify their own training needs by creating a baseline TNA within 8 weeks of the start of their studentship. This will allow the PGR to consider: 1) the skills they want to develop to support the research they will be undertaking; 2) the skills they need to support their future career; and 3) the best time to complete activities. The TNA will be reviewed annually, and routinely revised throughout

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework>

the PGCert process. Access to an online planning tool will help the student identify their skill gaps, but supervisors and any non-HEI partners involved in the studentship should also be consulted.

The structured TNA approach will include determining the desired academic, applied research and transferrable skills outcomes, linking desired outcomes with the PGR's critical competences, identifying trainable competencies, evaluating competencies, determining performance gaps, and prioritising training needs and how these will be addressed.

### Registering for the PG Cert

In advance of the SUPER Induction event, each PGR will register on the PGCert as administered by the University of Strathclyde (UoS). Registration will provide SUPER PGRs with access to UoS services relevant to the completion of the PGCert including student record services, student lifecycle services, IT services, and Virtual Learning Environment services. This includes access to online training courses offered by the UoS Researcher Development Programme.

Registering PGRs agree to the UoS holding and processing personal information including some sensitive information. The UoS will abide by UK Data Protection legislation and the university's normal code of practice regarding such data.

PGRs registered on the PG Cert must inform the Secretariat of any changes to their registration status on a postgraduate research degree programme that would affect registration on the PG Cert.

A PGR will only be able to receive the PGCert if all formal assessment criteria were met before the PGR exited their primary doctoral level postgraduate research degree programme.

PGRs enrolled on the PGCert agree to the use of data, images, and recording for the future promotion and evaluation of the programme.

Completion of the PGCert is a condition of funding. Any PGR wishing to withdraw from or suspend their place on the programme should contact the Secretariat in the first instance.

Any complaints regarding the programme should be directed to the Secretariat and/or the UoS course coordinator.

### PGCert Support

In addition to the support from supervisors, PGRs will have access to academic support through the PGCert RPD Course Coordinator, who will act as an advisor of studies, and administrative support through the Professional Development Administrator. Where needed, the Course Coordinator can also assist individual PGRs to map any training activities or opportunities onto the PGCert. The Course Coordinator will provide individual PGRs with academic advice and feedback on an *ad hoc* basis, and a regular summary of progress.

The Course Coordinator will be responsible for the marking of the PGCert assessments. The UoS will organise an annual Board of Examination, including an external examiner, to approve completed assessments and to award the PGCert. The UoS will deliver awarded certificates by mail.

### Registering for SUPER DTP Training events

A range of training opportunities will be advertised through the SUPER DTP website (<https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/events/>), where details regarding location, costs, pre-requisites etc. can also be found. Some will be free of charge and all that the PGR will be required to do is to cover the cost of the travel and subsistence, whilst other courses may attract a modest charge. Course

costs and expenses will need to be covered from the PGR's TSG allocation. In some cases, course numbers may be limited and access to the course will be on a first come first serve basis.

Data management has been identified as a key skills gap in the environmental sector but will be of great value to all students. NERC have granted funding to the [Data Tree Consortium](#) to deliver free online data management training. NERC research centres also offer [a wide range of training courses](#) that are open to NERC-funded PGRs.

If PGRs or Supervisors hear of any training courses or other events that may be of interest to others, please contact us on [superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk).

## Internships

PGRs are encouraged to undertake an internship during their studies. Internships are generally 1-3 months in duration and could be with a parliamentary/government department, a non-governmental body, a learned society, industry, or other organisations. SUPER will alert PGRs to any competitive opportunities, but PGRs are also encouraged to source their own internship opportunities.

A PGR can opt to either 1) undertake an internship as part of their 3.5 years (so can continue to receive their stipend/fees without suspending their studies); or 2) suspend their PhD studies (and therefore suspend the stipend/fees) whilst completing the internship. The PGR should discuss the option that would suit them best with their supervisor(s) and HEI before making any firm commitments. All parties should consider the impacts (both positive and negative) associated with undertaking an internship on the studentship, particularly if there are any terms related to extra funded time. The financing of the internship will need careful consideration. Any additional associated costs will need to be borne from the PGR's TSG (see Table 2) or external sources.

## Supervision and mentoring

Supervisors are bound by the practices and protocols of their host HEI in the first instance. The PGR is bound by the terms and conditions that apply to their studentship under the lead HEI, unless the agreement covering the co-supervisory arrangements and the registration of the PGR specifies otherwise. It is the responsibility of each supervisor to inform themselves of their roles and responsibilities as they apply within their HEI and to ensure that the PGRs they supervise are also aware of their responsibilities with respect to their host HEI, that of the collaborating HEI, and any other partners involved in their project.

All PGRs will be supervised by at least two Supervisors representing different DTP partner HEIs but supervision is not limited to two, provided there is clear justification for increasing the number of Supervisors.

Supervisors are recognised as key to the success of the SUPER DTP. Each HEI provides supervisor training, but should a supervisor identify a need for training for themselves or the wider network of supervisors, the Secretariat will seek to address and provide for this.

The day-to-day supervision of PGRs is the responsibility of their named Supervisors. However, as a recipient of SUPER DTP funding, Supervisors are obliged to recognise and support their PGRs in participating in SUPER DTP cohort building events and, through the PG Cert, skills development. Failure to do so, would represent a fundamental breach of the terms under which SUPER DTP funding is allocated for studentships.

For Collaborative studentships, there is a need to demonstrate engagement between the HEIs, the Collaborating Partner(s) and the PGR. This may include regular progress updates, meetings, and periods when the PGR works with or at the Collaborating Partners premises. It is the responsibility of the Supervisors to negotiate these arrangements, paying due regard to any necessary security, health and wellbeing, or financial implications.

### Mentoring

The DTP will seek to provide peer engagement where possible for current PGRs using the existing *alumni* researchers from partners, and now working in environmental research, policy, regulation, management, conservation, and business. With recognised benefits for both mentors and mentees, our programme will support transferrable skills development (e.g., communication, confidence, and strategic planning) learning from the experiences of others, and empowering PGRs to make significant career decisions.

### Health and Wellbeing

Staying mentally and physically healthy is important to ensure PGRs get the most out of their PhD experience and opportunities offered by SUPER. There will be opportunities at the SUPER cohort events to take part in physical activities and learn more about practical tools to look after their health and wellbeing. Information can also be found on the SUPER DTP website: <https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/wellbeing/>.

SUPER respects the internal procedures of the host HEI of each studentship and PGRs should use the resources available within their host HEIs to address issues related to health and wellbeing. PGRs are at liberty to raise concerns directly and in confidence with the Director or the Dean of Graduate School, but their response may be limited to signposting and assisting in securing contact with others best placed to advise or provide the necessary support. Whilst sensitive to issues of PGR support in this context, the Secretariat does not have the necessary expertise to deal with health and wellbeing issues and cannot be expected to take on these responsibilities other than as outlined above.

### Reporting Requirements

#### SUPER DTP Reporting

The Secretariat will be responsible for collating the necessary performance information for the SUPER DTP and reporting it to the EC and NERC. This process will dovetail with existing HEI Partners who will be responsible for supplying the required information. A succinct annual progress report will be provided to NERC and made available to the DTP community and stakeholders. With respect to operational matters, management, and budget etc., performance will be monitored against agreed operational targets. Science excellence will be monitored against established metrics at DTP level, with PGR publications, additional grant income and related Vitae training and experiential PGCert credits also being recorded for every PGR. Levels of stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and investment in-cash and in-kind in the DTP will be collated. Securing the minimum number of CASE Award studentships will be a target for each cohort. PGR participation in DTP activities will be monitored as well as feedback on satisfaction with DTP training and networking events. Supervisory and related collaborator performance remains the responsibility of the HEI hosting the DTP PGR. However, we will expect HEIs to bring to the attention of the Dean of Graduate School and Director, any issues related to supervisory performance which may have a material impact on the PGR or wider DTP. Any deficiencies in performance will be addressed as required.

## NERC Reporting Structure

DTPs must complete an annual report, which is a *pro forma* provided by NERC in summer each year. These reports must be submitted electronically to [researchcareers@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:researchcareers@nerc.ukri.org) and NOT through Je-S or UKSBS Ltd. The form is harmonised at the UKRI level and captures information not stored in Je-S including data on the student recruitment (including equality and diversity), CASE studentships, additional studentship funding sources, investments in the DTP (cash value and in-kind), training and cohort building provision, impacts, and updates and feedback.

The SUPER DTP may be required to discuss the progress and performance of the DTP with the NERC Executive and may involve contributions from the management board, partners, and PGRs in the spring/summer each year. Meetings will be framed around NERC's six success criteria: Research Excellence, Training Excellence, Multidisciplinary Training Environment, Excellent Students, Quality Assurance, and Success Stories.

The responsibility for completing UKRI-NERC requirements for reporting on PGRs through the [Je-S Studentship Details Portal](#) (Je-S SDP) lies with the host HEI, not the Secretariat. HEIs are expected to update Je-S SDP for their PGRs on an ongoing basis to reflect any change in status or circumstances and undertake an annual check by 31 October each year.

## Student Reporting Structure

Whilst each institution will have its own reporting requirements, the Secretariat may request from primary Supervisors a brief annual progress update for each PGR.

UKRI-funded PGRs are generally required to complete an annual online survey of their research, engagement, and other activities. This submission is via a system called ResearchFish and your university should coordinate their own submission and contact you directly. You can find additional details on the UKRI website: <https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/reporting-your-projects-outcomes/>.

## Financial Management

### General Principles

NERC provides the SUPER DTP with funding equivalent to a stated number of fully funded studentships each year (approximately 6 cohorts of 12, four-year studentships). In line with NERC rules, SUPER DTP and its partners can use these funds to attract additional investment in studentships thus increasing the overall number of studentships that can be supported.

Under the SUPER DTP financial model, a studentship will be funded for up to a maximum of 3.5 years (42 months), although percentage allocations are based on the full four years of funding. Whilst studentships may be registered for four years, subject to the host institution's protocols, only 3.5 years of funding is offered by the SUPER DTP.

Studentship funding is comprised of four components: the student stipend, fees, RTSG, and the management costs. The RTSG funding does not change over the lifetime of the DTP award unlike the stipend and fees that rise in line with the GDP deflator and are announced annually by UKRI.

Although the RTSG component of each training grant is calculated based on an amount per notional studentship awarded, there is flexibility regarding the amount of RTSG funding any one student can receive. DTPs can allocate funding at their discretion across the studentships they are offering considering the different funding requirements between projects but must ensure that all PGRs are

supported fairly. The DTP must be clear with each PGR regarding how much RTSG is available at the outset of the project and how to access the funds.

If a PGR has RTSG left in their budget at the end of the 3.5 year period that a SUPER PhD is funded for, and the PGR has had to request an extension, then with the permission of the lead Supervisor and host HEI, the PGR may repurpose these funds towards additional stipend payments. However, NERC and SUPER notes that PGRs and Supervisors should not be consciously holding back RTSG funds for this purpose if there are needs around consumables or research related costs. No funds can be carried beyond thesis submission.

In line with NERC principles, the SUPER DTP Partners have agreed that the equivalent of 6 months of the cost of a studentship will be retained by the DTP to cover the major proportion of the training and cohort building requirement for the PGRs. A proportion is also allocated to the operational costs of the DTP. In addition, a proportion of the RTSG grant is also retained centrally to allow some flexibility in the allocation of these resources.

For studentships that are collaboratively funded by particularly organisations (such as Nature Scotland or Marine Scotland for example), the Collaborating partner funds will be lodged centrally with SUPER and disbursed accordingly. Where the Collaborating partner or CASE partner is industry, it will be for the lead HEI to ensure that they claim the necessary payments from these partners directly. SUPER will seek confirmation from the lead HEI that such payments have been made.

Tables 2 & 3 below provides an *illustration* of the breakdown of studentship funding under the SUPER DTP Model.

**Table 2 – Example of breakdown of studentship funding for a 2023/24 start (subject to change).**

Financial Year	Total Fees 3.5	Total Stipend 3.5	Total RTSG 3.5 (in-house)
2019-20	£4, 712	£18,622	£2,000
2020-21	£4,831	£19,628	£2,000
2021-22	£4,953	£20,687	£2,000
2022-23	£2,539	£10,902	£1,375
Totals	£17,035	£69,839	£7,375

The amount in green should be available at the HEI for the student to use (with the agreement of their supervisor), and is likely to fund equipment, consumables, and fieldwork travel expenses, etc. In principle, more than the sum allocated in any one year can be used as we recognise that there may be higher costs at the start of a studentship than at the end. However, there is no additional funding if funds are spent at the start of the studentship, and should a PGR fail to complete, pro-rata funds over the annual allocation will need to be refunded.

**Table 3 – Centrally held TSG.**

Estimated Training Costs for a 3.5-year Studentship	
PG Cert	£1,800
Annual Retreat	£1,650
Annual Science Meeting	£1,200
Internship	£1,600
National Conference	£600
International Conference	£1,000
T&S for PG Cert Courses	£1,200
Total	£9,050

The amount that SUPER retains centrally is dedicated to training and increasing the PGR's potential to find employment after graduation. The PGR can claim funds from SUPER to cover those items in blue. The PGR would claim this initially from their HEI and the HEI will reclaim it annually in arrears from SUPER. It may be possible for a PGR to vire between blue budget lines – PGRs wishing to utilise this flexibility should speak with the Secretariat in the first instance.

All studentships are normally expected to start on or around 1<sup>st</sup> October each year. Under exceptional circumstance, other start times are possible, but please inform SUPER of early/late start intentions.

Invoices for PGR stipend, fees, and TSG should be submitted on a six-monthly basis by the lead HEI. An invoicing schedule will be issued from the finance officer via the Secretariat in the initial period of the studentship. Invoices should be identified as being for a specified SUPER DTP Studentship and should be charged against the appropriate account code, which will be provided by the finance officer for your institution. Please note that we will establish separate account codes for each cohort of students for each lead institution. All invoices should be sent by email to: [superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk) and Tanya Harkins: [th56@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:th56@st-andrews.ac.uk). The Secretariat will issue a reminder of the amount to be invoiced one calendar month before the invoicing due date. TSG expenditure should be invoiced separately for each PGR and these invoices should be submitted annually on the anniversary of the studentship start date.

As per UKRI T&Cs, Training Grant funds cannot be used to meet the costs of an activity that falls outside of the Training Grant Period or for the costs of an individual PGR which falls outside of their funded period.

#### Financial Reporting

**Final Expenditure Statement (FES):** This statement is the final financial reporting activity completed by the institution. For DTPs this is the responsibility of the Administrative Lead DTP partner to submit through Je-S at the end of the training grant.

**Interim Expenditure Statement (IES):** A mid-term statement of financial records requested by NERC. The Administrative lead DTP partner will be required to submit the IES upon request to NERC.



## Risk Matrix

The SUPER DTP will maintain a risk register (Annex 7) detailing any risks associated with specific operational requirements. The register will be reassessed regularly and updated as required by the Secretariat. The register will be reviewed at least annually by the EC and used to manage risks across the remit of the DTP.

The risk register is designed to provide the EC with a framework for considering and summarising potential risks to the organisation. It is designed to be a high-level assessment. More detailed risk matrices may be required to assess specific initiatives or projects undertaken by the DTP.

## General Policies

### Privacy Policy

A privacy policy has been developed in collaboration with the University of St Andrews Data Protection Officer: Christopher Milne, Head of Information Assurance and Governance. A copy of the privacy policy can be found on the [SUPER DTP website](#) and any questions can be directed to either [superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk) or [dataprot@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:dataprot@st-andrews.ac.uk). The privacy policy will be reviewed annually and updated by the SUPER DTP as required. The privacy policy was primarily developed with consideration to personal data processing associated with the SUPER DTP mailing list.

### Data Protection

As per the Collaboration Agreement: Each Party shall, at its own expense, ensure that it complies with and assists the other Parties to comply with the requirements of all legislation and regulatory requirements in force from time to time relating to the use of personal data, including, without limitation, (i) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (GDPR) and any national implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, for so long as the GDPR is effective in the UK, and (ii) the Data Protection Act 2018.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) handles all personal data in accordance with current UK data protection legislation and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) where appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation(s) to ensure that both PGRs it funds from UKRI funding, and individuals who receive grant funding, or who are later involved in the award, are made aware of how personal data may be used by both UKRI and the Research Organisation(s). This includes information relating to groups such as PGRs, supervisors, project partners, investigators, named researchers and support staff.

To meet UKRI's obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, contents of funded research proposals will also be made available on the Councils' websites and other publicly available sources. As a condition of funding, UKRI may use the data to publish information on awards made. We may also share information with third parties to support, for example, open access publication and reporting outcomes via Researchfish. This includes data submitted through Je-S Student Details (SD).

UKRI is also subject to the UK Freedom of Information Act (2000) and the Environmental Information Regulations (2004) and may be required to release grant information on request, subject to appropriate exemptions.



Further information is provided by the [UKRI Use of grant proposal information addendum](#) and via the [UKRI Privacy Notice](#).

### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Policy

SUPER recognises that equality and diversity should be embedded in all aspects of its governance. Find out more from the SUPER DTP website: <https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>. Working with our HEI partners, SUPER will:

- Promote diversity and representative balance in decision-makers, supervisors and training providers.
- Promote equality of opportunity in the recruitment of PGRs, in the recruitment panels, and in outreach and widening participation activities.
- Promote a positive environment in which to study and learn, by encouraging participation and involvement.

Everyone involved with SUPER will be treated with respect and be provided with equal opportunities to succeed, in an environment that enables them to do so.

### Complaints Procedure

Complaints related to the recruitment or conduct of an individual studentship and any related collaborators must, in the first instance, be directed to the appropriate authority within the lead institution hosting the studentship. Only if all relevant avenues within the host institution have been exhausted should complaints be escalated to the Secretariat and Director.

Complaints related to the overall operation of the SUPER DTP, its staff, Governance, or processes, should be submitted in writing to the Director: [superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:superdtp@st-andrews.ac.uk). All complaints will be acknowledged upon receipt. Subject to the nature of the complaint, the Secretariat will endeavour to respond within 5 working days.

### Logo use and acknowledgement guidance

The SUPER DTP should be referenced in acknowledgement on all PGR publications, reports, presentations, websites, and stationary. The SUPER DTP logo should always be used in its entirety and should not be altered, cropped, or manipulated in any way. Acknowledgement of funding from the SUPER DTP and NERC should also be used when presenting or publicising work performed under a NERC SUPER DTP studentship.

All SUPER DTP PGRs, researchers and investments must display the NERC logo on any promotional and corporate material including publications, reports, presentations, websites, and stationary.

Since SUPER PGRs have an award from UKRI-NERC, they must follow the UKRI [open access requirements](#) when publishing a research article.

NERC DTP2 grants must include NERC branding on all relevant materials and websites. The branding should be clearly displayed and must abide to the NERC Logo and Identity guidelines found on the NERC website.

The following should be used as written acknowledgement: *This studentship has been funded under the NERC Scottish Universities Partnership for Environmental Research (SUPER) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) (Grant reference number NE/S007342/1 and website <https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/>). Additional funding has been provided by [names of HEI, Collaborating and/or CASE Partners].*

The SUPER logo can be downloaded in a variety of formats from the SUPER DTP website:  
<https://superdtp.st-andrews.ac.uk/home/super-logo/>.

#### Collaboration Agreement

Each HEI partner will have signed up to the SUPER DTP via the SUPER Consortium Collaboration Agreement (Annex 8).

## Annexes

Annex 1: Stakeholders and key users

Annex 2: Cycle of operations

Annex 3: SUPER Confidentiality Agreement

Annex 4: SUPER Policy on Conflict of Interest

Annex 5: Proposal scoring template

Annex 6: Core skills

Annex 7: Risk register

Annex 8: Draft Collaboration Agreement