



CRUK CENTRES' NON-CLINICAL TRAINING

GUIDELINES



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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. GUIDELINES FOR YOUR CENTRE TRAINING ACCOUNT	4
2.1 RECRUITING PHD STUDENTS	4
2.2 EXPECTATIONS FOR TRAINING.....	4
2.3 SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS	5
2.4 MENTORING	6
2.5 POST PhD TRAINING SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES	6
3. MANAGING THE CENTRE TRAINING ACCOUNT FUNDING.....	6
3.1 THE LEVEL OF FUNDING	6
3.2 PhD STUDENT FUNDING	7
3.3 USES OF FUNDING	8
3.4 UTILISING UNDERSPEND FROM PhD FUNDS	9
3.5 INFORMATION GATHERING AND SHARING	10
3.6 EXTENSIONS, SUSPENSION & TERMINATIONS OF STUDENTSHIPS.....	12
3.7 FAILURE TO CONVERT TO DOCTORAL STUDIES AT THE END OF YEAR ONE	12
3.8 ANNUAL LEAVE	12
4. POLICIES THAT AFFECT THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE TRAINING ACCOUNT 13	
4.1 IP/OWNERSHIP	13
4.2 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	13
4.3 FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICIES.....	13
4.4 RESEARCH INTEGRITY, DIGNITY AT WORK AND COMPLAINTS	14
4.5 POLICY ON RESEARCH INVOLVING ANIMALS.....	15
4.6 RESEARCH ASSESSMENT APPROACH	16
4.7 OPEN ACCESS.....	16
5. GENERAL INFORMATION	16
5.1 USEFUL CONTACTS	16
APPENDIX.....	17
A. INFORMATION AND REPORTING	17

1. INTRODUCTION

Cancer Research UK (CRUK) is committed to developing the next generation of researchers by providing a world-class, supportive, flexible training environment that is essential for developing a successful academic career. We therefore expect CRUK-funded students to receive exceptional, high quality training packages as defined by the common principles included in the [statement of expectations for doctoral training](#).

CRUK funds non-clinical doctoral training through our Centre Training Accounts (CTA). A CTA grant is an award paid by CRUK to a research organisation for the provision of postgraduate study. Our clinical doctoral training is funded through our **Clinical Academic Training Programme Awards** and separate guidelines have been produced to support this funding.

Much of the detailed management of training funding, such as review of projects, selection of students and the financial management of the grants is devolved to the Centre Governance Boards. These guidelines are intended to support the Centre Governance Boards and the Training Account leads in managing the Training Accounts and developing training in the Centres. All Centre Training Account grants are subject to [Cancer Research UK's Grant Conditions and Special Conditions for Cancer Research UK's Centres](#).

Acceptance of a Training Account grant constitutes acceptance of both the conditions and these guidelines.

For all queries regarding your Training Account, please contact the [Research Careers team](#). We are committed to building the cohort of the future cancer leaders and part of this involves overseeing the support for CRUK PhD students.

2. GUIDELINES FOR YOUR CENTRE TRAINING ACCOUNT

2.1 RECRUITING PHD STUDENTS

The Centre Governance Board may allocate PhD student posts to whichever trainees and research programmes are appropriate, in line with the Centre's strategy, abiding by the university's local regulations and eligibility criteria, and taking account of a number of CRUK conditions outlined below:

- All PhD student posts should be openly advertised and competitively awarded;
- Diversity and inclusion should be promoted in all aspects of recruitment and career management of students;
- There should be a clearly defined process for identifying the best students and the most appropriate research projects in each round of recruitment. The emphasis should be on recruiting the most outstanding students;
- Information on each student should be provided to CRUK. Please see [section 3.5](#) and [Appendix A](#) for more details;
- At many of the Centres, there will be a number of PhD posts being recruited at the same time, supported by a variety of funders. Where possible and relevant, CRUK Centres should streamline recruitment with the host institution to attract the most competitive and talented candidates.
- The Centre is responsible for selecting, administering and supervising students throughout their period of training in accordance with current good practice as detailed in [section 2.2](#);
- Projects should lie within the remit of CRUK and the Centre(s) strategy;

Please contact the [Research Careers team](#) if there are any unforeseen difficulties with PhD recruitment.

2.2 EXPECTATIONS FOR TRAINING

The Centres are expected to arrange an introductory meeting with all newly recruited PhD students and outline the training and support that is available through the Centre, CRUK and the host institution.

CRUK endorses the [Statement of Expectations for Postgraduate Training](#) and as such is committed to further develop highly skilled researchers, as well as develop the next generation of researchers. The Centres should fulfil the expectations set out in this document.

CRUK is a signatory of [The Researcher Development Concordat](#) and as such, it is our expectation that the principles and obligations outlined within it are extended to the strategies to support doctoral training.

CRUK is keen to provide opportunities for its student cohort to network and foster relationships as they undertake their PhD training and beyond. CRUK will contact students directly to invite them to networking meetings. Supervisors should support and facilitate student attendance of local and CRUK events, as appropriate.

All new PhD students should be encouraged to visit [Vitae's website](#) for guidance on many aspects relevant to their training. Vitae is a national organisation championing the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff in higher education institutions and research institutes.

In addition, all students will receive a CRUK welcome pack, which will provide useful information about their CRUK studentship.

2.3 SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

CRUK believes that it is essential that each student receives support and supervision specific to their needs at each stage of their training and career. The expectation is that a supervisor's time is not split between too many students.

It is also important for students to receive regular support from their named supervisor, including personal development reviews, general good management practice and clear communication about expectations of the role of both student and supervisor during the course of the studentship.

SUPERVISORS LEAVING THE CENTRE

If the supervisor of a student funded through the CTA leaves, funds from the Training Account cannot be transferred. We envisage that an appropriate alternate supervisor will be identified within the Centre for the remainder of the studentship.

2.4 MENTORING

CRUK believes both formal and informal mentorship approaches to be an essential component of the training programme, providing support and guidance for the development of the student during their training.

The mentor should ideally be outside the mentee's direct line management and academic supervision. CRUK encourages the Centres to support and facilitate both formal and informal (e.g. peer-to-peer) mentoring relationships.

2.5 POST PhD TRAINING SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES

CRUK would encourage Centres to maintain engagement with former CRUK PhD students and considers that inclusion of alumni in networking/engagement events could be beneficial for shared learnings/cohort building.

CRUK believes that it is important for Centres to highlight career and funding opportunities to their students. Examples of opportunities include (but not limited to):

- Provide training opportunities to support the next stage of career development – e.g. writing grants, leadership/management training;
- Signpost the [CRUK Competency Framework for fellowships](#), as a useful tool when assessing the relevant research skills and experience, as well as wider enabling skills that would be expected for CRUK fellowships at different career stages;
- Signpost career and funding opportunities, for example through the [Interactive Career Framework](#);
- Visit our website for information on CRUK [funding opportunities](#).
- Provide support and training for students that are considering a non-academic career on completion of their PhD, for example with training on CV writing and by identifying their transferable skills. Signpost possible career opportunities and highlight alternative career paths.

3. MANAGING THE CENTRE TRAINING ACCOUNT FUNDING

3.1 THE LEVEL OF FUNDING

The value of each CTA is based on a set number of new non-clinical PhD studentships each year.

The number of posts is fixed at the start of the current Centre funding period and will not change until at least the first annual review of the Centre funding.

The level of funding is based on estimated average costs of trainees, and it should be sufficient to pay for the full costs of the posts. The funds must be used to support at least the minimum number of students allocated via your award.

Should the Centre be successful at leveraging additional funding, CRUK permits additional students being supported partially via the training award; the boards have flexibility over how the money is spent in this situation but please contact the [Research Careers team](#) to discuss your plans. In these cases, at least 50% of the total cost of the studentship must be drawn from the training account, the remaining costs may be funded from other sources, such as the Centre's or university's funds or from other research partners. A student must not be expected to bear the cost of any shortfall in funding. It is important that it is clear in the annual reporting which students are funded fully or partially (other source of funding to be provided too) from the training account award as outlined in [section 3.5](#).

The CTA Award will be issued in the form of an annual Grant Award Letter (GAL) that combines funds for allocated non-clinical PhD studentships as appropriate.

Annual installments of the award are issued in March, following an Annual Review Process.

3.2 PhD STUDENT FUNDING

PhD funding is based on a four-year PhD on a full-time basis. Should the duration of the PhD training differ from four years, please contact the [Research Careers Team](#). The table below details the total funding support for a studentship inside and outside of London, in Cambridge and in Oxford (last updated 1 April 2020).

Studentship location	Running Expenses
Outside London	£141,549.13
Inside London	£149,549.13
Cambridge	£148,605.50
Oxford	£146,439.50

A further breakdown of PhD funding is detailed below.

	Running Expenses	Fees	Oxford College Fees	Cambridge College Fees	Stipend Inside London	Stipend Outside London
Y1	£13,500.00	£4,195.00	£1,630.12	£2,352.12	£21,000.00	£19,000.00
Y2	£13,736.25	£4,268.41	£1,630.12	£2,352.12	£21,000.00	£19,000.00
Y3	£13,976.63	£4,343.11	£1,630.12	£2,352.12	£21,000.00	£19,000.00
Y4	£7,110.61	£4,419.11	£0	£0	£21,000.00	£19,000.00
Total	£48,323.50	£17,225.64	£4,890.36	£7,056.36	£84,000.00	£76,000.00

3.3 USES OF FUNDING

Allowable costs for students include*: stipend; PhD and college fees**; research running expenses***; travel, conference fees, accommodation and subsistence if the student is presenting; workshops and training. The student will be paid the standard CRUK stipend. CRUK PhD stipends are regularly reviewed.

* Please refer to our [cost guidance](#) for more details and contact the office to discuss areas of flexibility, particular with respect to computing costs for bioinformatics or other 'dry lab' research projects.

**CRUK pays college fees for Oxbridge colleges.

*** Up to £2,000 from the overall running expenses budget is ringfenced for researcher development activities to attend conferences, external training courses or workshops (registration, travel, etc) over the 4 year studentship. For students already part way through their studentship, the available researcher development activities budget is on a pro-rata of time remaining on the studentship (funding permitting).

For all students, both UK and international, CRUK will only fund university fees at a rate no higher than the home/UK fees applied to students funded by UK Research Councils. From 1 January 2021, students paying international fees also include EU and EEA nationals. Any shortfall between our standard fee allowance and the international fee rate must be covered by another source of funding by the institution and can't be covered by the student themselves.

It is not acceptable to use the CTA funding for:

- Recruitment and advertising costs

Please contact the [Research Careers team](#) if you would like to discuss other uses of the CTA funding.

3.4 UTILISING UNDERSPEND FROM PhD FUNDS

The [Research Careers team](#) should be informed of any underspends on your award. Any funding remaining after supporting the allocated number of 4-year PhD studentships may be used for other costs associated with research training undertaken in the Centre. We have listed some options how you could use underspend from your annual CTA below.

Suggested uses of remaining funding may include:

- Partially funding another PhD student in the Centre (if additional funding also available)
- Student travel to collaborating group to undertake specific training relevant to their PhD studies, or to attend a skills-based training course directly relating to their work;
- Support for skills-based or career training;
- Support for EDI related activities to promote diversity and inclusion among undergraduates with the aim to attract prospective PhD Students;
- Support for mentoring activities for PhD students;
- Support for scientific and networking meetings (locally and regionally) for students working in cancer research;
- Support for talented PhD students to attend workshops and programmes to provide training in the preparation of postdoctoral fellowship applications;
- Costs of parental or other long-term leave taken by PhD students

Please contact the [Research Careers team](#) if you would like to discuss any uses of your CTA underspend.

3.5 INFORMATION GATHERING AND SHARING

As previously highlighted, one of CRUK's strategic priorities is to train the next generation of cancer research leaders. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to us to know our students, their research projects, outputs and career progression. The information collected (detailed in Appendix A) will allow us to communicate directly with the students, welcome them to the 'CRUK family' and invite them to training and networking events. It will also allow us to accurately report on their research and outputs, and to understand their motivation to continue a career in cancer research – improving our training provision.

Gathering information about students

Annually, the Centres will be asked to report on key achievements and challenges that are relevant to the Centre's training objectives and overall training strategy through the Annual Review Process.

Centres will also be asked to provide data on new students and any changes to currently active students via the Annual Review process. If any details change e.g. a student is recruited after providing the information to CRUK; a student withdraws or takes long-term leave as outlined in [section 4.2](#), please inform CRUK within 30 days. Please also indicate which students are funded fully or partially (other source of funding to be provided too) from the CTA award.

Students will be asked to register a ResearchFish account, CRUK's official research reporting tool, and to submit their research outputs on an annual basis. Additionally, we will ask CRUK funded PhD students who are either mid-way or have finished their studentship to share their career plans after their PhD. This information will be invaluable in helping us to improve the support and training offered to current and future students.

Further information on the type of data that will be collected, and the use of the submitted data can be found in the [Appendix A](#).

Please contact the [Centres & Institutes Team](#) or [Research Careers team](#) if you have any queries about the process.

Gathering information about the host Centre

CRUK is interested to learn how the PhD student training is progressing throughout the year and how CRUK can best support you. Therefore, we are keen to hear about any challenges that you may face and any suggestions on how to improve support for the students. We encourage you to share this information with us informally through our site visits, emails and phone calls throughout the year.

Please get in contact with the [Research Careers team](#) if you would like to us to visit or attend any relevant meetings/ events at your Centre/host institution.

The Centres & Institutes and Research Careers teams organise meetings for Centre Managers and relevant training leads throughout the year. These meetings will be an opportunity for the Centres to discuss training issues, share good practice, and to help create a network of training, support and collaboration across the Centres.

Information sharing

The Centre must ensure that students, supervisors and project partners are made aware of what information, including personal data will be shared with CRUK, and how this information will be used by CRUK. Please note that all personal information is and will be kept in accordance with our privacy policy, a copy of which is available [here](#).

- The Centres must ensure that when individuals accept a studentship, they are aware that they are permitting CRUK to contact a studentship holder to request that they complete a diversity monitoring form with their details. CRUK is committed to promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in research. As part of this commitment, we are conducting diversity data monitoring across our research funding. For students, we are aiming to understand at an aggregate level who is funded through our training awards, how they progress throughout their careers and what barriers, if any, there are for students from different backgrounds staying in research and progressing. We will use information from this form to analyse who our students are and who we're funding and to develop future ways of working. We may share anonymised, aggregated data with our leadership team and Scientific Executive Board and may also share this with other funders or other sector bodies for the purpose of sector research and analysis. In the future, we may publish anonymised, aggregated data about our student cohorts on our website and/or in (online) journals (see also [section 4.1](#)).
- The Centre should disclose student contact details to CRUK. This is to allow correspondence with our students. Correspondence is likely to be about courses, events or possibly surveys and questionnaires about their training.
- The Centre should disclose any information that CRUK requests regarding the progress of their studies, submission of their thesis and completion of their studies.
- CRUK or a third party on behalf of CRUK may contact a studentship holder during or beyond the life of their studentship for evaluation of training/support given or career tracking purposes.

3.6 EXTENSIONS, SUSPENSION & TERMINATIONS OF STUDENTSHIPS

CRUK expects students to complete their training without interruption where possible and does not encourage the suspension of awards unless as defined below. Where suspensions are agreed, total periods of suspension must not normally exceed one calendar year over the lifetime of the award.

As outlined in [CRUK's parental or other long-term leave policy](#), consideration should be given to requests for abeyance due to taking long-term parental (maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption), sick or other long-term leave. As per [section 4.2](#) below, CRUK should be informed and updated about end dates and expected submission dates to reflect periods of abeyance.

Where a CRUK funded student takes parental, sick or other long-term leave, Cancer Research UK will, where appropriate, extend the official end date of the Grant through a no cost extension for the period equivalent to the period of leave taken.

The Centre must make suitable arrangements with supervisors/lab managers/other relevant contacts for coping with absences of students for parental (maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption), sick or other long-term leave, extended jury service and holidays.

3.7 FAILURE TO CONVERT TO DOCTORAL STUDIES AT THE END OF YEAR ONE

If a student fails to upgrade to doctoral studies at the end of year one (formally via viva or informally) the student's award must be terminated. The remaining funds will be deemed to be underspend and can be used for other purposes as outlined in this document (see [section 3.4](#)). If a student leaves within the first year, another student can be recruited in their place using the resulting underspend.

3.8 ANNUAL LEAVE

The Centre should ensure that a clear policy on annual leave entitlement exists and that this is made known to the student at the start of their studentship.

4. POLICIES THAT AFFECT THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE TRAINING ACCOUNT

4.1 IP/OWNERSHIP

Please note that any data and outputs generated by a CRUK funded PhD student during the studentship is property of the university or institute as set out in the university statutes and/or any studentship/stipend arrangements.

4.2 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

CRUK is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in its research funding activities. We expect CRUK Centres to embed EDI in their research practices, policies and culture as far as possible, including by actively promoting EDI, offering EDI training, identifying barriers to inclusion and progression for underrepresented groups and promoting an inclusive and [positive research culture](#).

4.3 FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICIES

Part-time working

CRUK encourages and is supportive of the option of studying part-time. Studentships should be advertised as available on either a full-time or part-time basis. Part-time awards should not be less than 50% of full time. The stipend should be provided on a pro-rata basis for part-time study. Please contact the [Research Careers team](#) and inform us of any changes to study patterns that may include changes in a student's personal or employment circumstances.

Parental or other long-term leave

According to [CRUK's parental or other long-term leave policy](#), all students funded by CRUK are entitled to paid parental or long-term leave as follows:

For **PhD students**, recognising that they are not employees of the host institution, CRUK will bear the costs of PhD student's parental or long-term leave at the CRUK stipend rate for a fixed duration according to the type of leave taken:

Leave type	Paid leave entitlement
Sick leave	4 months at full stipend then 4 months at half stipend p.a.
Maternity/adoption leave	26 weeks at full stipend, then 13 weeks at statutory rate, then 13 weeks unpaid

Paternity or partner leave	2 weeks at full stipend
Shared parental leave	CRUK will match the entitlement for paid maternity/adoption leave (less 2 weeks mandatory maternity/adoption leave), adjusted according to the duration of leave and payments received by the other parent.

There is no qualifying period for taking long-term leave. Students are entitled to paid parental or long-term leave provided that they return to work for a period of time as agreed with their supervisor. Students must also follow their host institution's notification requirements.

In the first instance, CRUK expects the cost of the paid leave for students funded through the CTA award to be borne through any underspend on the Centre's Training account. If, at reconciliation stage, the leave costs cannot be borne through underspend on the Centre's Training Account, Centres should discuss with CRUK [Research Careers team](#) about using any core funding underspend.

In all cases, if a student needs to take long-term leave please:

- Provide the student's name, institution, leave start date, leave end date, reason for leave and any new expected end date/viva date to the [Research Careers team](#).
- Keep accurate records and certificates of leave entitlement for example maternity certificate, MATB1 form or sick notes.
- Contact [the Research Careers team](#) if costs cannot be borne through underspend to discuss alternative funding arrangements.

4.4 RESEARCH INTEGRITY, DIGNITY AT WORK AND COMPLAINTS

[Research Integrity](#)

CRUK requires host institutions to have robust policies to prevent research misconduct and investigate research misconduct allegations. The Centre is responsible for ensuring that students and supervisors:

- Receive training and support regarding research integrity, experimental design, statistical analysis and reporting standards; and
- Understand that CRUK-funded research must be conducted according to the highest standards of research practice to ensure the integrity and reliability of the research and outputs.

Please also refer to CRUK's Policy on [Research integrity: guidelines for research conduct](#).

Dignity at Work in Research

The Centre is also responsible for helping foster positive research environments and for ensuring supervisors and students are aware of [CRUK's Policy on Dignity at Work in Research](#).

Complaints

The Centre is responsible for ensuring that students and supervisors have access to effective procedures for resolving problems arising from the administration and supervision of the studentship.

4.5 POLICY ON RESEARCH INVOLVING ANIMALS

In addition to complying with all applicable legal, regulatory and ethical requirements, Centre's should ensure that students and supervisors conducting research involving animals are provided with CRUK's [Policy on the Use of Animals in Research](#), understand the importance of principles of the 3Rs (replacement, reduction and refinement of animals in research), experimental design, NC3Rs guidance, reporting animal work and the importance of these principles in improving research reproducibility and reducing research waste.

Further information can be found here:

- [Experimental design principles and statistical analysis](#) – in this regard, CRUK strongly encourages students and supervisors to familiarise themselves with the [NC3Rs Experimental Design Assistant](#) (a free online tool) and the NC3Rs' other [experimental design resources](#);
- The [NC3Rs guidance documents](#), including [Responsibility in the Use of Bioscience Research](#) and, if applicable, the [NC3Rs Guidelines: Primate Accommodation, Care and Use](#); and
- [Reporting](#) animal work consistently with the [ARRIVE Guidelines](#), including the fact that this is mandatory for all CRUK-funded research involving animals; and
- The critical importance of each of the above principles in [improving research reproducibility and reducing research waste](#).

Training on these topics, however, is equally important for students whose research does not involve animals. Centres should ensure that all students receive detailed training on these topics, including how to accurately identify reporting standards that are applicable to their work. Students should also understand the significant impact of poor experimental design and/or reporting practices on research reproducibility and research waste.

4.6 RESEARCH ASSESSMENT APPROACH

CRUK is a [DORA \(San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment\) signatory](#). As such, we expect host institutions to develop complementary outputs sharing policies, to sign up to DORA and apply DORA principles in student recruitment and assessment.

4.7 OPEN ACCESS

Centres must ensure that students understand that it is a condition of their funding that, if they have an original primary article accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, it must be published on an open access basis. The three key obligations students should understand are that:

1. [Europe PMC deposit within 6 months](#): CRUK-funded researchers, including students, must ensure that an electronic copy of the final, published form of their papers are available on Europe PubMed Central (Europe PMC) as soon as possible and no later than 6 months after publication.
2. [CC-BY license](#): If the journal charges an article processing charge (APC) for the Europe PMC deposit, the paper must be published with a CC-BY license, so that it may be freely copied and reused (for example, for text- and data-mining purposes), providing that the original authors are properly credited. Other licenses will not be compliant with CRUK's grant conditions.
3. [Journal eligibility](#): CRUK-funded researchers, including students, may only publish in journals managed by publishers who have agreed to the COAF/Wellcome Trust publisher requirements. Most major publishers and many smaller publishers have signed up to these requirements– a full list is available [here](#).

5. GENERAL INFORMATION

5.1 USEFUL CONTACTS

All correspondence relating to the students and management of the Centre Training Account should be send to the [Research Careers team](#) .

APPENDIX

A. INFORMATION AND REPORTING

Use of submitted data may include:

- Sharing proposal information on a strictly confidential basis with other funding organisations.
- Statistical analysis in relation to the evaluation of postgraduate training trends.
- Policy and strategy studies.
- Making it available on CRUK's website and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists.

Data that will be made available may include the following data:

- Student name;
- Student email address(es);
- Name(s) of project supervisors;
- Supervisor(s) email address(es);
- Host institution
- Project titles and abstracts;
- Registration and expected submission (VIVA) dates;
- Medical specialty (CRTFs only);
- ORCID ID – ORCID is a unique 16-digit code that remains with a researcher throughout their career and across data collection platforms. ORCID ID links to an ORCID profile, which a researcher can populate with information on grants/funding, outputs and career history. Collecting ORCID IDs enables us as a funder to link historic and current application data and outputs from a researcher. We would like Centres to encourage their students to create an ORCID ID, which will enable us to accurately report on their research and its outputs and track students' careers upon completion of their studentships.
- Numbers of students in particular regions, universities or departments in context of the Training Grant funding announced.
- Aggregated information regarding demographics, student numbers, stipend levels, qualifications, age at start, migration levels (from first degree university to another) etc.