

SOUTH WEST BIOSCIENCES DOCTORAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023 / 2024

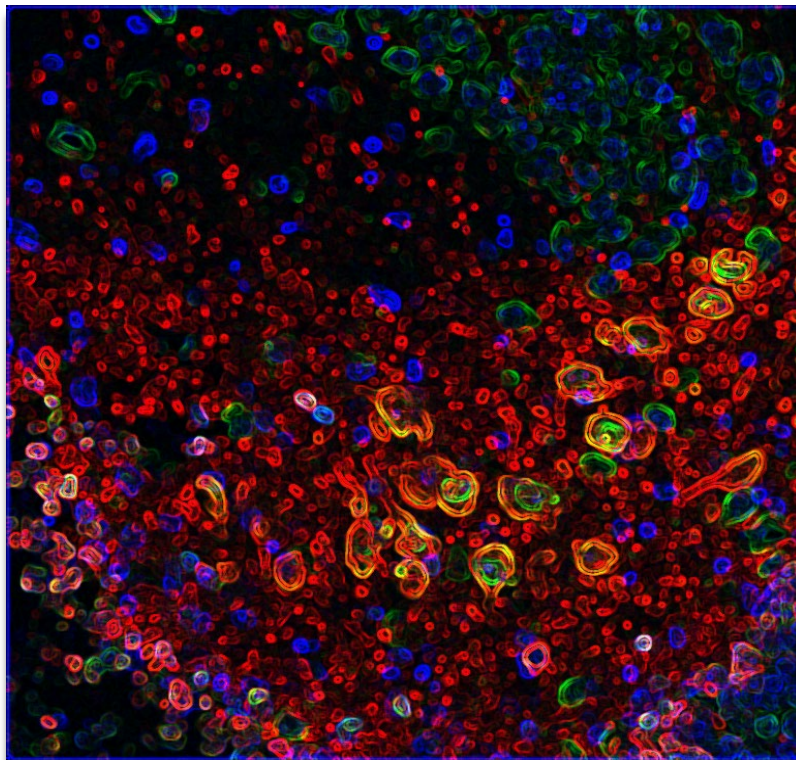


Photo credit: Cathy Beedie, former SWBio DTP student



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Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the Information contained in this handbook was correct at the time of release, however, it may be amended during the programme to reflect any changes. The current version will be available on the [SWBio DTP website](#) and supersedes all previous versions.

As a SWBio DTP student, it is your responsibility to ensure that you read through and understand the contents of this handbook. If there is any content that you do not understand, please contact swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk or your local [Implementation Group Representative](#).

This handbook is written based on students undertaking the SWBio DTP programme full-time. For students undertaking the programme part-time, please discuss further with the DTP Hub.

This handbook should be read in association with your registered university’s Code of Practice or equivalent (relevant policies and procedures) for postgraduate research programmes:

- [University of Bath](#)
- [University of Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff University](#)
- [University of Exeter](#)
- [Swansea University](#)
- [University of the West of England \(UWE\)](#)

Contacts

The SWBio DTP consists of a central DTP Hub based at the University of Bristol. This includes the: Director, Deputy Director, Hub Manager and Coordinator.

The important contacts for you within the DTP Hub are:

- **SWBio DTP Deputy Director**

Responsible for academic aspects of the delivery of the programme across the partnership, including the first taught year.

- **DTP Administrative Hub (SWBio DTP Hub Manager and Coordinator):** swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk

Responsible for managing the administration aspects of the delivery of the programme across the partnership.

In addition, within your institution, you will have [local named DTP representatives](#) whom you can contact with any problems or queries in relation to the DTP programme.

Note: The DTP is separate from your local university administration and you should direct questions regarding annual progress monitoring, holiday, your stipend, supervisor/project issues, HR policies to the relevant departments/schools within your institution. If you still require further guidance, please feel free to raise your issue with the SWBio DTP Hub.

For the taught year, the important contact for you is:

- **Faculty of Life Science Taught Education Team:** fls-taught@bristol.ac.uk

Responsible for managing the administration aspects of the taught year.

Student support

It is important to the DTP that you feel well supported throughout your postgraduate studies. This is a high priority for our programme.

Wellbeing

Your main contact for academic pastoral support for the DTP within your institution will be your local DTP [Implementation Group Representative](#). Alternatively, you can approach your local DTP [Management or Operational Group Representatives](#) (the latter for non-academic pastoral support). The SWBio DTP Hub members are always available too and can often advise and facilitate your engagement with other services.

In addition, all our institutions provide extensive and professional pastoral support for students, which can be accessed via the links below:

- [Bath](#)
- [Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Exeter](#)
- [Rothamsted Research](#)*
- Marine Biological Association (MBA)+
- [Plymouth Marine Laboratory \(PML\)](#)#

- [Swansea](#)
- [University of the West of England \(UWE\)](#)

*Link accessible only via Rothamsted's VPN using a Rothamsted laptop/computer. Alternatively e-mail donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk

+Details can be found in the MBA handbook for PhD students. Alternatively e-mail katherine.helliwell@mba.ac.uk

Link accessible once connected to PML network. Alternatively email Ruth Airs ruai@pml.ac.uk

By their very nature pastoral issues are invariably individual and so it is important that you engage and seek help from anyone within our DTP structure or your institutional structure with whom you feel comfortable. Please be assured that all matters will be dealt with sensitively and in confidence wherever possible.

Annual Leave

We encourage you to use your annual leave entitlement throughout the year, as part of a positive work-life balance.

Institutional information about taking annual leave as a postgraduate student:

- [Bath](#)
- [Bristol](#) (section 4.6)
- [Cardiff](#) (section 7)
- [Exeter](#) (section 6)
- Rothamsted – *please refer to your registered university and record annual leave via the Rothamsted [local online system](#)*
- MBA, PML – *please refer to your registered university*
- [Swansea](#) (section 1)
- [UWE](#)

Other support

To ensure students from all backgrounds and communities can get the best out of their student experience, and to create a supportive and inclusive environment, our institutions have several resources, networks and support teams in place. This includes support for (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Student wellbeing
- Students with caring or childcare responsibilities
- Mature students
- Students with disabilities
- International students
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students

- LGBTQ+ students
- Bullying and harassment

Further information can be found on the '[supporting our diverse student cohort](#)' SWBio DTP webpage.

Note: Although some webpages may appear to have an undergraduate focus, support staff are experienced in working with postgraduate students and can provide tailored advice and support as well as additional information and contacts.

DTP funding support

Caring responsibilities

The SWBio DTP has funding available to support additional costs for students with caring responsibilities beyond the normal working patterns and requirements associated with the studentship. Please contact the DTP Administrative Hub to discuss further and to fully understand eligible costs (swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk).

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)

The BBSRC provides funding to support students who have a disability through the [disabled students allowance](#).

Your local postgraduate team or disability support team (contacts can be found on our '[supporting our diverse student cohort](#)' SWBio DTP webpage) can help you with the application process. We encourage you to make contact with them prior to starting your programme to avoid any unnecessary delay in getting required support in place.

If you have any medical conditions/accessibility requirements that may have an impact whilst attending DTP-led teaching/cohort activities, we do encourage you to e-mail swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk so we can provide support and make reasonable adjustments where possible.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The SWBio DTP is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles throughout all of our processes, from application through to completion of the PhD programme, via our students, supervisors and DTP governance groups.

[SWBio DTP EDI Statement >>](#)

As a SWBio DTP student, there are many ways by which you can become actively involved with supporting EDI both within the DTP, your institution and externally.

- [Find out more how you can support EDI as a SWBio DTP student >>](#)
- [UKRI's EDI strategy and planning >>](#)

BBSRC/UKRI* documentation

As a BBSRC-funded DTP student, please ensure you familiarise yourself with and abide by the following BBSRC/UKRI documents:

- [BBSRC Statement on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice](#)
- [UKRI Terms and Conditions of Research Training Grants and Training Grant Guidance](#)
- [UKRI Policy on Open Research](#)
- [UKRI Policy on Research integrity](#)

**UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) came into existence in April 2018 and includes the seven Research Councils (BBSRC included), Innovate UK and Research England.*

DTP acknowledgement

As you are in receipt of a BBSRC-funded studentship, please acknowledge BBSRC and SWBio DTP support on all publications, presentations, exhibitions, press announcements and other similar events. The BBSRC logo can be downloaded from the [BBSRC website](#) and the SWBio DTP logo can be made downloaded from the [SWBio DTP website](#) for use on posters and in talks.

When acknowledging the BBSRC and the SWBio DTP in publications, please use the following format:

Acknowledgement of a single grant: 'This work was supported by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council-funded South West Biosciences Doctoral Training Partnership [training grant reference xxxx].'

The funder should be written out in full, followed by the training Grant reference in square brackets.

Acknowledgement of multiple grants: 'This work was supported by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council-funded South West Biosciences Doctoral Training Partnership [training grant reference xxxx]; the Natural Environment Research Council [grant number zzzz]; and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council [grant number aaaa].'

Multiple grants should be separated by comma and space. Where the research was supported by more than one agency, the different agencies should be separated by a semicolon, with "and" before the final funder.

BBSRC Training Grant Reference Numbers:

- **DTP2: BB/M009122/1** - Students who started in Sept 2015-2019
- **DTP3: BB/T008741/1** - Students who started Sept 2020 onwards

Note: Some students may have an additional BBSRC training grant reference number due to how the studentship is funded. The DTP Administrative Hub will be in contact with you and your supervisor if

you have an additional BBSRC Training Grant Reference number to acknowledge. This will have no further impact on your studentship.

Open Access

Publishing of your research should be in accordance with normal academic practice and the [UKRI Policy on Open Access](#). Open Access is 'to make published outputs of UKRI-funded research widely and freely accessible, under conditions that allow maximum reuse'. Your supervisors should provide guidance on this.

Expectations of the DTP

This is to remind you that upon accepting your offer of a SWBio DTP studentship, you have agreed to abide by the '[South West Biosciences Doctoral Training Partnership's Expectations of Students](#)' (refer to Appendix 1).

Please remember that a key expectation of your studentship is that your thesis is submitted within 4 years of starting the programme.

Location during your studies

This is an in-person PhD programme, and as such, it is expected by the DTP and BBSRC that you will live in the UK and in reasonable travel to your host institution. This is to ensure you receive adequate support and contact with your supervisor, access to training and facilities and to be in contact with your research group and other students. There may be periods of time where you may be away (in the UK or outside the UK) for example, placements, conferences, and training, which is acceptable.

Research placements

You may find that you have one or more supervisors/collaborators external to your main institution and may have the opportunity to conduct research/spend time at these institutions. Normally these will be expected to be of short duration. When based at a different institution, please ensure you follow their local rules and procedures.

As a SWBio DTP student, you are expected to spend the majority of your time at your host institution (for Standard studentships with associate partner, this will be normally be approximately 50/50 at each of the lead partner institutions). If you are being asked to undertake your PhD project for large periods of time away from your host institution*, please discuss this with your local [DTP Implementation Group representative](#) as soon as possible.

**For CASE studentships, these are research placements in addition to your 3-18 month placement with your CASE partner.*

Support for when studying away

To help find accommodation for your rotation projects and other placements, below are links to accommodation resources across our partnership:

- [Bath](#)
- [Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Exeter](#)
- [Swansea](#)
- [UWE](#)
- Rothamsted: donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk
- [MBA + PML \(Plymouth university website\)](#)

Your peers, research group(s), PIPS/CASE hosts will also be helpful in providing suggestions and guidance when looking for accommodation.

In addition, when you are visiting another or our SWBio DTP partner institutions, please do make contact with the [institutional SWBio DTP student representatives](#). They will be able to introduce you to the local SWBio DTP cohort and act as a useful institutional contact.

Where you are expected to by your institution, please do also ensure you alert your institution when you are away for periods of time.

Remember, you will remain as a student at your registered university throughout any periods away, and as such still able to access university resources and any student support, including student well-being support. Your main supervisor will also remain in regular contact (normally at least once a month), and will continue to help support you and your studies when studying away.

New intake

Welcome week*

Local arrangements for welcome week will differ between the universities so please check the schedule of the welcome week at the university with which you are registered. During or in close proximity to this week, you will be invited to a local SWBio DTP student welcome session.

**May also be referred to as enrolment or induction week by your institution.*

Second year mentors

When starting the SWBio DTP programme you will each be assigned a second year student from the DTP as a mentor from within your host institution. They are a point of contact for you for informal

support and guidance. Second year mentors will have just been through the first year of their programme and can assist you in adjusting to postgraduate life as part of the SWBio DTP. It is anticipated that you will meet them at the start of your studentship, as part of your DTP induction, and are freely contactable also beyond your first year.

Visiting status

You will be given visiting status to those partner universities who will be delivering the teaching. This will allow you to have access (you will receive a student access card) and be able to use their facilities (for example, online systems, the library, courses, the gym). Visiting status will be given for 4 years from the start of your studies. **If you require visiting access at any of the partners beyond the 4 years, please contact swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk.**

You will receive details on how to register with the relevant partner universities (Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, Exeter, UWE) before the start of the programme. Please ensure you complete this in a timely manner, including upload of any photographs for your student access card. **At the start of each academic year, you will be required to re-register your visiting student status across the partnership.**

For the research organisations (Rothamsted, MBA, PML), and Swansea University, visiting status can be given but depending on the institution, this may be only for the duration of time you will physically spend at the institution. Please e-mail the respective [DTP Operational Group representative](#) when you require visiting status at any of these.

If you are an international student or a home student with settled/pre-settled status and are requested to upload your proof of right to study, this is in error. You will just need to confirm you are a SWBio DTP student and these documents are held by your registered university.

Registration and supervision

Please refer to the relevant studentship section below. Where daily activities are undertaken within different organisations to your registered university, during this time you will be following their local rules and procedures.

Our partner research organisation's rules and procedures:

- [Rothamsted*](#)
- MBA+
- [PML#](#)

**Link accessible only via Rothamsted's VPN using a Rothamsted laptop/computer. Alternatively e-mail donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk*

+Details can be found in the MBA handbook for PhD students. Alternatively e-mail katherine.helliwell@mba.ac.uk

Link accessible when connected to PML network. Alternatively email ruai@pml.ac.uk

Standard/CASE studentship hosted by a university

Supervision

As part of the programme, you will have a main supervisory team which will comprise of at least:

- a main supervisor
- a second supervisor
- CASE studentships: a non-academic (CASE) supervisor

Your main supervisor will be responsible for monitoring your academic progress. You will also have a designated contact for pastoral support.

You may also have additional supervisor/collaborators as part of your project. Please ensure you speak with your main supervisor at the start of your studies to understand their different roles in supporting your research.

Registration

You will be registered for a higher degree at the home university of your main supervisor and so will be subject to their local procedures for performance monitoring, progression between years and thesis examination. Your home school/department will be responsible for your annual progress monitoring.

Standard/CASE studentship hosted by Rothamsted Research

Supervision

As part of the programme, you will have a main supervisory team which will comprise of at least:

- a Rothamsted supervisor
- an academic supervisor
- CASE studentships: a non-academic (CASE) supervisor

You will also have a second local Rothamsted/academic supervisor and a designated contact for pastoral support. Your Rothamsted supervisor will be responsible for supervising you on a daily basis and your academic supervisor will be responsible for monitoring your academic progress. Your registered university may use the terminology of main supervisor for your academic supervisor.

There may be periods during your studies where you will need to visit your registered university (e.g. annual progress programme monitoring, training/developmental opportunities). Please ensure you speak with both your Rothamsted and academic supervisor at the start of your studies so you are aware of these expectations, to understand their different roles and how they will support you throughout your studies.

You may also have additional supervisor/collaborators as part of your project. Please ensure you speak with your Rothamsted supervisor at the start of your studies to understand their different roles in supporting your research.

Registration

If you will be mainly based with Rothamsted Research (North Wyke or Harpenden site), you will be registered for a higher degree at the university where your academic supervisor is based, and from where you will have received your official offer of a BBSRC-funded SWBio DTP studentship. This arrangement is necessary because Rothamsted Research is a non-degree awarding body.

You will be required to register at the collaborating university during their induction week and attend their respective registration/induction events. As a registered student at the university, you will be expected to follow university postgraduate rules and procedures as set out in the university's Code of Practice or equivalent (relevant policies and procedures). However, your daily activities will most likely take place within Rothamsted Research and during this time you will be following their [rules and procedures](#)*. More information of your precise duties to Rothamsted Research can be obtained from the Rothamsted postgraduate team.

**Link accessible only via Rothamsted's VPN using a Rothamsted laptop/computer. Alternatively e-mail donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk*

Standard studentship with an associate partner

Supervision

As part of the programme, you will have a main supervisory team which will comprise of at least:

- two lead supervisors - a core partner supervisor and an associate partner supervisor

You will have a second local supervisor at each of the lead participating institutions and a designated contact for pastoral support. The lead supervisor from the university where you are registered will be responsible for monitoring your academic progress. Your registered university may use the terminology of main supervisor for this supervisor. If you do not have a lead supervisor registered at a university, you will have a listed academic supervisor who will take on the main supervisor role within your registered university.

During your project, there will be times where you will be located at the institution of each of your lead supervisors. During this period, your local lead supervisor will be responsible for supervising you on a daily basis.

You may also have additional supervisor/collaborators as part of your project. Please ensure you speak with your lead supervisors at the start of your studies to understand their different roles in supporting your research.

Registration

You will be registered for a higher degree at the home university of your university lead supervisor/academic supervisor and so will be subject to their local procedures for performance monitoring, progression between years and thesis examination. Your home school/department will be responsible for your annual progress monitoring.

Joint degree award

If you are undertaking a standard studentship with associate partner in collaboration with UWE/Bristol you will be eligible for a joint degree award (subject to meeting both institution's requirements for a PhD). You will be fully registered at both universities, with administration processes (such as finances, annual progress monitoring) being managed by Bristol, who will also act as the main point of contact for your studentship. Please refer to the joint degree further guidance provided when your official offer was made. You will also have received further information alongside the time of when you received your formal offer.

CASE studentships

Some projects will have a non-academic (CASE) partner. You will have been informed of the CASE partner when you applied to the project. This means you will have a non-academic (CASE) supervisor as part of your supervisory team and you will be expected to undertake a placement of 3-18 months with your CASE partner. Of note, this may involve time-away from your host institution in order to undertake your CASE placement.

Costs related to your CASE placement (such as travel and accommodation away from where you normally reside for your PhD) will be agreed with and covered by your CASE partner.

As part of the funding requirements, all CASE students are expected to submit a post-placement report on completion of their placement. It is your responsibility to contact CASE@bbsrc.ac.uk to obtain the report to complete.

Further information about [CASE placements](#) can be found on the [SWBio DTP website](#).

Supervision

Meeting frequency

Meetings are to help support you with your studies and to maintain a successful and supportive supervisor-student working relationship. It is an opportunity to discuss ideas, problem-solve together, check-in on your research progress, for advice and guidance, career and personal development as well as to support your well-being.

You are expected to formally meet with your main supervisor* (at least once a month). This also includes whilst you are on research placements, PIPS/CASE placements, fieldwork and during your rotation projects.

With your rotation projects, we expect you to be meeting with your rotation project supervisor at least once a week.

We encourage you to arrange joint meetings with your supervisory team. This will be especially beneficial with your main supervisory team and also for where supervisors are based across different institutions.

Meetings are to be arranged in consultation with the relevant supervisor(s). To make sure you get the most of these meetings do take the time to prepare ahead of the meeting and record any outcomes/actions following the meeting.

- For Rothamsted-based studentships: Rothamsted supervisor
- For standard with associate partners studentships: Lead supervisors

Training needs analysis

It is very important as a postgraduate research student to consider your professional development throughout your studies. This is to ensure you have the training and the tools to enable you to excel as a researcher and beyond. To help support your individual training, you will be asked to complete a training needs analysis (TNA).

It is expected that you will complete a TNA with your main supervisor (for Rothamsted-based studentships this will be your academic supervisor) as part of your registered university requirements. For studentships with a Rothamsted supervisor or two lead supervisors, you may want to do this also in discussion with these supervisors.

For institutions where a TNA may be partly implemented, there is a SWBio DTP TNA document that can be used, which is downloadable from the [DTP Blackboard site](#). This focuses on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and there is guidance on how to complete this.

Following your TNA meeting, you will then need to upload the DTP/institutional TNA to the relevant submission point on the DTP Blackboard site at the end of October/start of November. This may be used for discussion at the meeting that takes place at the end of the first year (refer to 'project refinement' section) and for future reviews of your training.

To ensure your professional development remains a priority throughout your studies, we strongly encourage you to review your training progress annually, if not more frequently, with your supervisory team.

Mandatory taught first year

As part of the programme, you will be required to undertake a taught first year. Further information about the taught component can be found in the [SWBio DTP Taught Handbook](#). The taught year is managed by the Faculty of Life Science Taught Education Team (fls-taught@bristol.ac.uk) based at Bristol, as the taught year is governed by the University of Bristol.

To progress into your second year of studies, you will be required to successfully pass the first taught year. **This is taught at master's level and you will be required to pass 180 credit points with a pass mark of 50% for each unit.**

You should not be undertaking annual progress monitoring during your taught first year within your registered university. If you are included in local annual progress monitoring in error, please contact your local DTP [Implementation Group representative](#).

Laptops

You will be provided with a laptop at the start of the taught first year which should be kept for the duration of your PhD studies. These laptops will either come pre-loaded or with instructions on how to load all the necessary software required for the taught units.

The laptop remains the property of the institution you received it from and must be returned at the end of your studies to your main supervisor (Rothamsted / lead supervisor where applicable).

To be able to access the internet at each of the sites, please ensure you have [eduroam](#) activated following your local institutional guidelines in advance of the taught units starting:

- [Bath](#)
- [Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Exeter](#)
- [Rothamsted*](#)
- MBA, PML – *does not support eduroam*
- [Swansea](#)
- [UWE](#)

**Link accessible only via Rothamsted's VPN using a Rothamsted laptop/computer. Alternatively e-mail donna.fellowes@rothamsted.ac.uk*

Project refinement

Where feasible, there will be an opportunity to refine your project in response to your two rotation projects. This will take place near the end of your second Rotation Project (July/August) and will be in discussion with your main supervisory team. You will then be invited to meet with your local DTP Implementation Group Representative where you will have the opportunity to discuss how you are finding the programme so far, your project refinement (if any) and to raise any problems or queries you may have.

Project management training

To assist you with the transition from your rotation projects into your main PhD programme, you will complete a self-paced project management training course during July/August-September. This will include completion of key project planning documents (for example Gantt chart/scoping document) which will serve as valuable resources to refer to throughout your PhD studies. **Completed project planning documents will need to be submitted to the DTP Hub in September and approved by your main supervisory team.**

Professional Internships for PhD Students (PIPS)

It is a requirement of BBSRC that each student completes a 3-month (or part-time equivalent) placement outside of an academic research environment*. **It is expected that you will undertake the placement during year 2 or 3 of your programme.** The aim of the PIPS scheme is for you to

understand the broader context of your research and to expose you to the range of opportunities in which you can apply your PhD skills and training after you graduate.

Further information about this placement scheme can be found on the [SWBio DTP website](#). Please refer to the 'finance' section of this handbook for details about your PIPS budget. **Please note that at the end of your PIPS, you will be required to complete a BBSRC PIPS report within 3 months of completing your PIPS. It is your responsibility to contact PIPS@bbsrc.ac.uk to obtain the report to complete.**

It is expected that Annual Progress Monitoring (APM) takes precedence over the placement. Therefore, the APM submission deadlines and meetings should be taken into account when deciding on dates for the placement. However, if it is unavoidable that:

- the APM submission deadline coincides with the placement, it is normally expected that the required work is submitted prior to starting the placement or during the placement by the original deadline; and/or
- the APM meeting coincides with the placement, it is the student's responsibility to alert their postgraduate administrator in a timely manner to discuss this further.

***Note: If your project has a CASE partner, undertaking a PIPS in addition to your placement is optional. However, due to visa restrictions, international students are not able to undertake an optional PIPS.**

Cohort activities

As part of this programme, there will be [DTP cohort activities](#) that you are expected to attend (unless otherwise stated). These activities bring all students from across the partnership together, and provide excellent opportunities for networking, peer-to-peer learning and sharing of knowledge. These cohort activities include for example:

- Annual Student Conference
- Annual Careers Conference
- Student-led Retreat
- Research Theme-specific activities e.g. site visits, workshops
- Thesis Boot Camp

[Further information about each cohort activity >>](#)

Further cohort activities may become available during your studies.

We also have available a student-led cohort training fund to support training identified by student's as valuable for their cohort.

[Further information about the student-led cohort training fund >>](#)

Cohort events calendars

Please refer to our [DTP cohort events calendar](#) on the SWBio DTP website for dates of the cohort activities and attendance expectations.

Attendance

If for any reason you are unable to attend these activities, please e-mail swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk as soon as possible. **It is expected that you ensure your research or other activities do not interfere with attendance at these cohort activities.**

If you have any medical conditions/accessibility requirements that may have an impact whilst attending these cohort activities, we do encourage you to e-mail swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk so we can provide support and make reasonable adjustments where possible.

If absences are not for acceptable reasons or are frequent, you may be required to meet with the DTP Hub or your local DTP Implementation Group representative to discuss further. This is also so we can provide support to students where needed.

Other

SYSMIC and Learn to Discover (L2D)

As a SWBio DTP student, you have access to SYSMIC and Learn to Discover online courses.

- [SYSMIC](#): provides training in maths and computing based around biological examples, using programs such as MATLAB and R.
- [Learn to Discover \(L2D\)](#): targeted at bioscience and medicine professionals, providing skills in Python programming, data science, machine learning and aspects of Artificial Intelligence.

Enrolment on these courses are optional and you will be contacted by the DTP Hub in advance of these dates for registration.

	SYSMIC	L2D
Start dates	Normally Nov and May	Normally Oct and May
Time investment	5hrs per week over 6 months	Bi-weekly, 3 hrs per week over 7 months
Cost (to be met by your individual RTSG)	£850	£1000

Due to the time investment if you choose to do SYSMIC we strongly recommend that you undertake this course in the second or third year of studies. However, if you are undertaking a project that includes substantial systems-based computational modelling, such that it is beneficial for you to undertake this course in your first year, please contact swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk to discuss this further. If you wish to undertake this in your first year, we recommend a May rather than a November start due to the workload associated with your taught units and assessments.

Researchfish

[Researchfish](#) is a system used by the BBSRC to gather information from BBSRC-funded researchers and students about the outcomes, outputs and impact of their work, such as publications, collaborations, internships and public engagement activities.

As a BBSRC-funded student, you must submit data to Researchfish when requested. You will receive log-in details early in September as you are just about to start your third year of studies. You will be required to submit data annually from the third year of your studies, and you are encouraged to complete Researchfish up to three years following completion of your studentship.

Your main/academic supervisor should also have been given access to your Researchfish account as a team member, so they can offer guidance. Additional supervisors can be added to your studentship details as 'team members'.

Please ensure you speak with your main/academic supervisor and/or undertake available training at your institution or online before completing Researchfish for the first time.

If you do not submit to Researchfish during your final year, you will be asked to complete a DTP Student Accomplishment Tracker.

Do not add any confidential, sensitive or personal information to Researchfish as outcomes submitted may be made public (e.g. through [Gateway to Research](#)).

Further information:

- Researchfish support desk: support@researchfish.com
- [UKRI guidance on Researchfish](#)

COVID-19 impact on research

In response to the pandemic, UKRI COVID-19 related funded extension requests can be applied for, however, we anticipate that the majority of students earlier in their studies (i.e. Cohort 2019 onwards) will be able to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

Very importantly, these are only available to students whose research has significantly been impacted by COVID-19 and who are unable to mitigate the impact or adjust their projects to complete on time.

We are normally expecting these to not be applied for until the final 6 months of a studentship (when mitigation approaches and impact can be best assessed) and for up to a maximum of 3 months. Funding available will be limited and will be prioritised on a critical needs basis.

[Further information on our policy and the application >>](#)

In vivo skills awards

An annual call (normally April/May) will be launched to support additional costs associated with *in vivo* research projects.

Eligibility

Proposed projects **must** fit the BBSRC definition of advanced *in vivo* skills:

Research skills training where a major component of the work involves developing and applying sophisticated physiological, immunological, pharmacological, behavioural observation or experimentation in whole, living protected animals (as defined in the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986) in order to understand normal and abnormal biological/psychological mechanisms.

Note: Any such vertebrate in its foetal, larval or embryonic form is a protected animal only from the stage of its development when:

- (a) in the case of a mammal, bird or reptile, half the gestation or incubation period for the relevant species has elapsed; and*
- (b) in any other case, it becomes capable of independent feeding.*

Students who are just about to complete their first year and onwards are eligible to apply.

Student representation

As part of the DTP there is the opportunity to act as a student representative. Each core partner institution will have a student representative who will normally be within their second or third year of studies. There will also be a dedicated student representative for the taught first year, associate partner institutions, international students and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Student Champion.

Responsibilities of student representatives include:

- attending Implementation, External Advisory and Equality, EDI Group meetings where they can provide feedback about ideas, issues and concerns on behalf of their fellow students.
- organising the Student-led Retreat.
- attending local graduate meetings so they can feedback on behalf of the SWBio DTP to their institution.

Finance

As part of your studentship, you will have access to a Research and Training Support Grant (RTSG). The RTSG is available to support your research (such as consumables, fieldwork) and training needs (e.g. workshops, conferences, travel to DTP cohort activities). The RTSG budget is as follows:

- Year one: **£1,000/rotation project**
- Years two-four: **£14,000 in total**

Note: if you underspend the RTSG budget in your first year, this can be carried over into the following years of your studies.

In addition to your RTSG, you also have a fieldwork budget of **£1920**. This is as follows:

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SWBio DTP website: www.swbio.ac.uk

SWBio DTP e-mail address: swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk

- **£1,000** for your PIPS placement – this covers costs associated with accommodation and travel.
- **£920** for fieldwork – this can cover costs associated with fieldwork/conferences.

Note: it is expected that you will not access your fieldwork budget until you are in year 2.

You have flexibility within your fieldwork budget, so if you underspend in your PIPS budget, you will have extra money to spend on fieldwork/conferences and *vice versa*. If you exceed your fieldwork budget, you can use your RTSG to cover these costs, but this is at the discretion of your supervisors.

As a DTP student, you are expected to monitor your budgets in liaison with your supervisors. To access the RTSG, a student charge code will normally be provided. Please contact your local finance team for further information about this student charge code. If you are working across institutions (most applicable for Rothamsted hosted students and Standard studentships with associate partner), there may be additional budgetary constraints on what you can spend at each institution. Please liaise with your supervisors for further details about the amount of budget held at each institution.

Please also note that there are many additional sources of funding, usually in the form of bursaries, to help you attend conferences and courses. These are often provided by professional societies and they will require you to prepare and submit an application for funding..

We also do recommend you discuss with your supervisor when deciding to undertake activities which could impact on your time such as training, conferences, public engagement/outreach.

Paid work

We as the SWBio DTP recognise that often students may supplement their stipend with paid work but also wish to ensure that paid work does not adversely affect your academic progress. If you will be undertaking paid work, please consult with your supervisor, bearing in mind the impact that it may have on your studies. Please also take into account the SWBio DTP funder's (BBSRC) terms and conditions for paid work as indicated in the [UKRI Training Grant Guidance](#).

University guidance:

- Bath – speak with your supervisor
- [Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Exeter](#)
- [Swansea](#)
- [UWE](#)

Some of the terminology used by institutions refer to additional paid work incorrectly as 'part time' work. Please note your mode of study for your PhD i.e. if you are a full-time student you are expecting to be studying full-time.

Please also note that international students have additional terms and conditions to adhere to. Please refer to [UKCISA guidance on student work](#).

There will be many opportunities within your local institution for example, to demonstrate or be involved with teaching.

Financial support

Whilst undertaking activities related to your PhD project and training, there may be costs associated (e.g. travel, accommodation, registration costs). Depending on the activity, these costs can be met by the following:

- studentship RTSG
- fieldwork budget
- your PIPS/CASE placements hosts (where agreed)

You will need to follow the local policy related to expense claims and what costs can be incurred. Do also contact your local finance team to see what support/resources are available when covering these costs in the first instance.

If you encounter financial difficulties at any stage of your PhD studies, your registered university has advice and guidance to help support you through these times. These can be found via the following links:

- [Bath](#)
- [Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Exeter](#)
- [Swansea](#)
- [UWE](#)

Sharing of data

[Please refer to the SWBio DTP data sharing policy >>](#)

Further information can be found on your registered university's data protection webpages. If you have any queries or concerns about the use of your personal data during your time as a student, please contact your local data protection team.

Further information about how BBSRC may share your data can be found in the [BBSRC Data Sharing Policy](#).

Photographs

During cohort activities, photographs will be taken which may be used for publicity purposes for the DTP, for example the SWBio DTP website, leaflets and posters. If you do not wish to give permission for your photographs to be used, please inform the DTP Hub and also the photographer at the time.

Additional information

Social media

We encourage you to use social media to communicate about your research and raise your public profile. As social media is a public platform, it is good practice to reflect on content before you post

DTP social media:

- [LinkedIn group](#)
- [Slack group](#) – an invite will be sent out by the DTP in advance of when you first start.
- Twitter: @SWBio_DTP

How to find out more

The DTP has:

- a monthly student bulletin that will keep you informed and updated about the DTP
- a [Student Hub](#) on the SWBio DTP website which provides you with information about cohort activities, student representatives, public engagement opportunities, important DTP handbooks.

Contacting you

The DTP (via swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk) will also contact you regularly through year group mailing lists which will end in jiscmail.co.uk. It is important that you read these e-mails and we please ask that you respond in a timely manner where needed.

[Further information about JISCMail \(including GDPR information\) >>](#)

Statistics support

Support with the use of statistics for your research is available at each institution:

- [Bath](#)
- [Bristol](#)
- Cardiff: E-mail data-clinic@cardiff.ac.uk
- Exeter: Contact your local Director of PGR
- Rothamsted: Contact [Suzanne Clark](#)
- [Swansea](#)
- MBA, PML, UWE: Contact your local supervisor

Appendix 1: SWBio DTP's Expectations of Students

The BBSRC-funded South West Biosciences Doctoral Training Partnership (SWBio DTP) studentship you have been offered is part of a programme that trains postgraduate students in world-class bioscience across our core partners: universities of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter, together with Rothamsted Research, and our associate partners: Marine Biological Association (MBA), Plymouth Marine Laboratory (PML), SETsquared Bristol, Swansea University, UCB Pharma and the University of the West of England (UWE).

By accepting your offer of a SWBio DTP studentship, you agree to:

- abide by the programme requirements as described in the [SWBio DTP Student Handbook](#) and the [SWBio DTP Taught Handbook](#).
- abide by the terms and conditions of the funder (BBSRC):
 - [UKRI Terms and Conditions of training grants and training grant guidance](#)
- abide by the regulations described in the following documents for the duration of your taught year and accept the jurisdiction of the Senate:
 - University of Bristol's [Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes](#).
 - University of Bristol's [Rules and Regulations for Students](#)
- submit your thesis within four years of starting the programme.
- attend DTP cohort activities when expected and to alert the DTP Administrative Hub (swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk) as soon as possible if you are unable to attend.
- monitor your studentship budgets in liaison with your supervisors.
- keep in regular contact throughout your studies with your supervisory team.

For Standard DTP studentships / Standard DTP studentships with associate partner:

- undertake a placement as part of the [Professional Internships for PhD Students \(PIPS\)](#) scheme. This will require you to:
 - do your utmost to ensure the placement takes place in the second or third year of your studies.
 - complete your BBSRC PIPS report within 3 months of completing your PIPS (you will need to contact PIPS@bbsrc.ac.uk to obtain the report).
 - abide by the requirements described in the '[Placements](#)' section of the SWBio DTP website.

For CASE DTP studentships

- undertake a 3 month (minimum) placement with your CASE partner.
- complete a BBSRC CASE report following your CASE placement. (You will need to contact CASE@bbsrc.ac.uk to obtain the report).
- abide by the requirements as described in the '[Information for Students](#)' CASE placement section on the SWBio DTP website.
- **Note: If you have an affiliated CASE partner as part of your project, a PIPS placement is optional.**

Please note, research across the SWBio DTP is diverse and addresses biological phenomena at a wide range of levels. You are expected to respect the differing research approaches and techniques used by colleagues and to behave in a considerate and professional manner at all times in your dealings with one another. Healthy debate of research approaches and outcomes is a normal part of research and is welcomed, however, such discussions should always be conducted with respect for colleagues, acknowledging the validity of the diversity of views and approaches that can be expected in a broad programme of this type.

This '[SWBio DTP Expectations of Students](#)' document is available online. This is the current version and supersedes all other versions. This document will be reviewed annually in January.

Appendix 2: Overview of DTP training programme

Y1	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
	Institutional welcome weeks	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching		Rotation Project 1 ends	Teaching			Annual Careers Conference	Rotation Project 2 ends	
	Provide student profiles, create LinkedIn profile + send ORCA iD	Annual Student Conference									Optional: Student-led retreat	
		Meet second year mentor										
		Institutional inductions + cohort event			Institutional cohort event - at some point during this period						Project refinement period + 1-1 meeting with IG rep	
		Complete TNA: end of Oct			Optional: Research Theme Activity - at some point during this period							
Y2	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
	Submit scoping doc + Gantt chart to DTP hub	Assigned first year mentee								Annual Careers Conference	Student-led retreat	
		Annual Student Conference									Project management launch event	
		Institutional cohort event			Institutional cohort event - at some point during this period							
	1-1 meeting with IG rep				Research Theme Activity - at some point during this period							

	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
Y3		Annual Student Conference								Annual Careers Conference	Student-led retreat	
		Institutional cohort event			Institutional cohort event - at some point during this period							Optional: Project management refresher event
					Research Theme Activity - at some point during this period							
Y4		Annual Student Conference					Thesis Boot Camp			Annual Careers Conference	Optional: Student-led retreat	
		Institutional cohort event			Institutional cohort event - at some point during this period							
					Optional: Research Theme Activity - at some point during this period							

	Institutional cohort activity
	DTP cohort activity
	DTP cohort activity (optional)
	To complete
	Taught year (Teaching + Rotation projects)