

SOUTH WEST BIOSCIENCES DOCTORAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

SUPERVISOR HANDBOOK 2023 / 2024

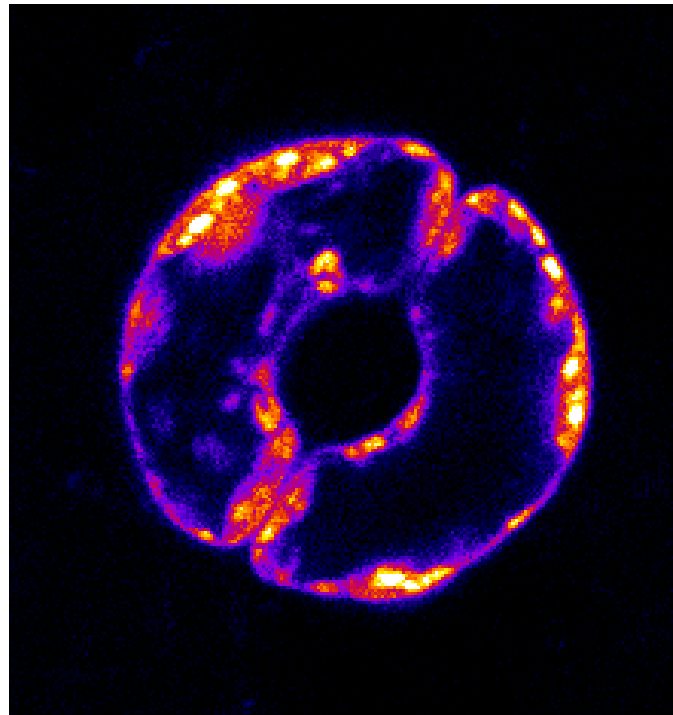


Photo credit: Ashley Pridgeon (and Brogan Harris), SWBio DTP student

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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.

This handbook is written based on students undertaking the SWBio DTP programme full-time. For students undertaking the programme part-time, part-time arrangements must be discussed and agreed with the DTP Hub.

This handbook should be read in association with the student’s registered university’s Code of Practice or equivalent (relevant policies and procedures) for Postgraduate Research Programmes:

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

A '[supervisor key dates calendar](#)' can be found on our website. This is a useful resource to read alongside the SWBio DTP Supervisor Handbook.

Contacts

The SWBio DTP is governed by a DTP Hub (based at Bristol), in collaboration with a number of groups across the partnership. The central DTP Hub includes the: Director, Deputy Director, Hub Manager and Coordinator. The SWBio DTP Hub can be contacted via swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk.

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.

[Governance structure of the SWBio DTP >>](#)

Student support

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

Wellbeing

Your student's main contact for academic pastoral support for the DTP within your institution will be their local DTP [Implementation Group Representative](#). Alternatively, they can approach their 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 their 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@pml.ac.uk

We also actively encourage students to use their annual leave entitlement throughout the year, as part of a positive work-life balance.

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)

Please be aware that BBSRC will, if the circumstances require, also provide a [disabled students allowance](#). If you think your student may be eligible, please contact your local postgraduate team or disability support team. Please encourage your student to engage with their university disability support services as soon as possible (and before they commence their studies), to ensure support and reasonable adjustments are in place at the very start of the PhD.

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, the SWBio DTP 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.

BBSRC/UKRI* documentation

As you are in receipt of a BBSRC-funded DTP studentship, please ensure you familiarise yourself with and abide by the following BBSRC/RCUK 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

Please ensure that you and your student 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 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 training grant reference number due to how the studentship is funded. The DTP Administrative Hub will be in contact with you if your student has an additional BBSRC Training Grant Reference number to acknowledge. This will have no further impact on the studentship.

If you had former SWBio DTP students who were part of our 2012-2014 intakes, a different BBSRC Training Grant Reference is to be used: BB/J014400/1.

Open Access

Publication of results of your student's research should be in accordance with normal academic practice and the [UKRI Policy on Open Access](#).

Note: UKRI funds for Open Access are administered directly through institutions and not through the DTP.

Expectations of the DTP

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

Please remember that it is important and **expected that the student's thesis is submitted within 4 years of starting the programme**. Failure to abide by this condition affects the future award of studentships to the programme and will reduce the likelihood of students being placed within research groups with poor track records.

It is imperative that you inform and discuss with your [local named DTP representatives](#) and/or the SWBio DTP Hub if the following occurs or is likely/planned to occur (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Change in main/second supervisor (or Rothamsted/academic supervisor and lead supervisors respectively)
- Significant change in project direction
- Student progression issues
- Suspensions/parental leave/change in mode of study/withdrawals
- Introduction/loss of a CASE partner

Note: changes to the main supervisory team, addition of a CASE partner or a significant change in the direction of the project will need to be approved by the SWBio DTP's Management Group. This

is to ensure that the SWBio DTP continues to fund projects that meet the requirements of the DTP and BBSRC. It is expected that you liaise with your local DTP [Management Group representative](#) as soon as you are aware of any potential changes for advice and guidance.

Further information and the relevant forms to complete for the approval of changes can be found on the '[Information for supervisors](#)' webpage of the SWBio DTP website. Please complete the relevant form and return to swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk, copying in your institutional DTP [Management Group representative](#).

Continuation of SWBio DTP studentship funding is conditional upon ongoing compliance with our programme conditions. These may be additional to any study regulations/codes of practice implemented within our partner institutions.

Importantly, studentships are awarded on the basis of a programme of study agreed by our funders and based within the SWBio DTP institutions. It is an expectation of the BBSRC that students are primarily based at the host SWBio DTP partner institution for the duration of their PhD. It is therefore unlikely that the SWBio DTP will agree the transfer of a studentship away from our partnership institutions in the event that a supervisor moves away from our network.

Student location during studentship

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

Research placements

Research placements elsewhere are acceptable where these benefit the programme of research and have a clearly measurable potential outcome, but would normally be expected to be of short duration. Our view is that placements must be compatible with effective and continued engagement with our programme. For any further guidance, please contact the DTP Hub (swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk).

We are supportive of exposing our students to the very best research environments and opportunities but ask that you discuss any significant periods of planned absences with us beforehand. We reserve the right to refuse such plans where we feel they will undermine the coherency of the programme experience. This does not affect absences for planned fieldwork although this should also avoid disruption to the taught component and cohort activities. We consider placements during the last six months of a studentship likely to be disruptive to the writing up process and should be avoided.

Throughout any placement period students must continue to fully engage with the SWBio DTP programme activities and requirements. Where a placement is undertaken within a different organisation to their host institution, during this time they will be following their local rules and procedures.

CASE studentships

CASE students are required to undertake a placement of 3-18 months with the CASE partner. A rotation project could constitute towards the placement requirement but it is expected that all costs associated with the rotation project (consumables, travel, accommodation) are met by the CASE partner. There is also a BBSRC mandatory financial academic contribution of £1400/annum for organisations of >51 employees.

It is the main supervisor's (academic supervisor for Rothamsted led projects) responsibility to ensure a CASE studentship agreement is put in place with the CASE partner at the start of the studentship. **There is a specific SWBio DTP CASE agreement to be used so please highlight that the agreement is for a SWBio DTP CASE studentship when liaising with your institutional contracts team.**

As part of the funder's requirements, all CASE students are expected to submit a post-placement report on completion of their placement. Students should contact CASE@bbsrc.ac.uk to obtain the report to complete.

- [BBSRC FAQ's >>](#)
- [BBSRC information about CASE partners >>](#)

As a main/Rothamsted supervisor it is your duty to maintain contact with the student throughout their CASE placement (at least once a month) and to hold regular meetings with your student and CASE partner. **As part of the DTP, it is also expected that your student will arrange a visit (in person or virtually) with you and their CASE supervisor to discuss and reflect on the progress of their placement.** This visit will include a visitor report which will need to be returned to swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk within **one month** of the visit.

[Further information about CASE placements for PhD supervisors >>](#)

Supervision

Supervisory team

Each project has a main supervisory team which will consist of a main and a second supervisor. If these are based at different institutions, additional second local supervisors will be required. There may be also be additional supervisors/collaborations associated with projects. **Please note that the SWBio DTP ethos is that students should have collaborative supervisory teams, and not a single individual supervisor (although we acknowledge there will be a main supervisor).**

Due to the different types of studentships and the partners involved, please find below further guidance about supervisor terminology that may be used instead of main and second supervisor.

Supervisor terminology

Standard/CASE studentship - Rothamsted-led projects:

- **Rothamsted supervisor:** Lead supervisor at Rothamsted who is responsible for supervision whilst student is based at Rothamsted. Must be eligible to act as a supervisor by the collaborating university and for the entirety of the PhD.

- **Academic supervisor:** Based at the collaborating university and responsible for academic progress monitoring of the student. Must be eligible to act as a main supervisor for the entirety of the PhD within their university.

Standard studentship with an associate partner:

- **Lead supervisor:** there will be two lead supervisors; one lead supervisor based at the core partner and one lead supervisor based at the associate partner, who are responsible for supervision while the student is based at their respective institutions.
The lead supervisor at the registered university will be responsible for academic progress monitoring of the student. Must be eligible to act as a main supervisor for the entirety of the PhD within their university.
- **Academic supervisor:** part of supervisory team if both lead supervisors are based at research organisations. Based at the collaborating university and responsible for academic progress monitoring of the student. Must be eligible to act as a main supervisor for the entirety of the PhD within their university.

CASE studentship:

- **Non-academic supervisor:** Lead supervisor at the CASE partner who is responsible for supervision whilst student is on their placement. They must be eligible to act as a supervisor by the collaborating university.

Institutional expectations

At each of your institutions, you will have a supervisor expectations document to abide by which also will include advice and guidance on:

- roles and responsibilities as a supervisor
- student-supervisor meetings
- student issues
- student support
- your supervisory team

Please read these alongside the [‘South West Biosciences Doctoral Training Partnership’s Expectations of Supervisors’ document](#).

- [Bath](#)
- [Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Exeter](#)
- [Rothamsted](#)
- MBA+
- [PML #](#)
- [Swansea](#)
- [UWE](#)

+ Email Glen Wheeler glw@mba.ac.uk

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

Supervisor support

Alongside our students, support for supervisors is also very important to the DTP. Support through the DTP is available through your [local DTP representatives](#) as well as the SWBio DTP Hub. In addition, there are a number of supervisor support resources in place at your local institution.

- [Bath](#)
- [Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Exeter](#)
- [Rothamsted](#)
- MBA+
- [PML#](#)
- [Swansea](#)
- [UWE](#)

+ Email Glen Wheeler glw@mba.ac.uk

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

Supervisory meetings

As mentioned previously, the SWBio DTP ethos is that students have a collaborative supervisory team, and not a single individual supervisor (although we acknowledge there will be a main supervisor). To maintain this collaborative working, we recommend joint meetings take place regularly. This will be especially beneficial where supervisors are based across institutions.

For standard with associate partner studentships where there is a formalised 50/50 collaboration, we expect there to be joint meetings with the student and the two lead supervisors at least once a month.

Throughout the PhD, **we do expect the main supervisor (or equivalent) to meet formally with the student at least once a month** as outlined in institutional policies. Though we do recognise that informal and formal meetings will take place more frequently within the biosciences.

We still expect these monthly meetings to take place whilst the student is away for e.g. for a rotation project, research placement, fieldwork and CASE/PIPS placements. **For rotation projects, we expect the rotation project supervisor to meet the student at least once a week.**

It is recommended that meetings are recorded within a calendar and outcomes/actions from meetings are recorded (your institution may have an online system by which this information can be captured).

Supervisor training

As part of being a supervisor for a DTP student, there will be workshops and training that you will be required to complete. This may include activities such as:

- DTP supervisor induction session – **September / October** (first year)
- DTP supervisor workshop to support thesis writing – **March/April** (final year)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) online resource – **ahead of student starting**

New Intake

Supervisor induction and Welcome week*

Ahead of the new intake starting, supervisory teams for these students will be invited to an institutional DTP supervisor induction. The aim of this induction is to make supervisors aware of the requirements of the programme and to manage expectations.

During or in close proximity to your university's/collaborating university's welcome week, your student will be invited to a local SWBio DTP student welcome session.

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

Registration and supervision

Please refer to the relevant studentship section below.

Standard/CASE studentship hosted by a university

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

Main supervisory team for these studentships:

- Main supervisor
- Second supervisor
- CASE studentships: a non-academic (CASE) supervisor

A second local supervisor at the registered university will be part of the supervisory team if the second supervisor based in a different institution to the main supervisor.

Please do ensure that at the start of their studies the student clearly understands the different roles and responsibilities of their supervisory team/collaborators.

Standard/CASE studentship hosted by Rothamsted Research

If the student will be mainly based with Rothamsted Research (North Wyke or Harpenden site), the student will be registered for a higher degree at the university where the academic supervisor is based. The student will be required to register at the university during their welcome week and attend their respective registration/welcome events.

As a registered student at the university, they will be expected to follow university postgraduate rules and procedures as set out in the university's Code of Practice. However, their daily activities will most likely take place within Rothamsted Research and during this time will be following [rules and procedures](#)*

Main supervisory team for these studentships:

- Rothamsted supervisor
- Academic supervisor

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

There will also be a second local Rothamsted and academic supervisor as part of the supervisory team.

The Rothamsted supervisor will be responsible for supervising the student on a daily basis and the academic supervisor will be responsible for monitoring academic progress. **Please ensure that at the start of their studies the student clearly understands the roles and responsibilities of their Rothamsted and academic supervisors (plus others within the supervisory team/collaborators) and how you will support them throughout their studies.**

**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

The student will be registered for a higher degree at the university at one of the lead supervisors and will be subject to the local procedures for performance monitoring, progression between years and thesis examination. The home school/department will be responsible for their annual progress monitoring. The student will be required to register at the university during their welcome week and attend their respective registration/welcome events.

Main supervisory team for these studentships:

- two lead supervisors - *a core partner supervisor and an associate partner supervisor*
- Academic supervisor - *only if neither lead supervisor's are based at a university*

There will also be a local supervisor within each institution as part of the supervisory team.

The lead supervisors will be responsible for supervising the student on a daily basis at their respective institutions and the university academic/main supervisor will be responsible for monitoring academic progress. When the student is based at a university, they are expected to follow university postgraduate rules and procedures as set out in the university's Code of Practice; similarly, if based at one of the research organisations, the rules and regulations of that institution:

- [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

Please ensure that at the start of their studies the student clearly understands the roles and responsibilities of their main supervisory team (plus others within the supervisory team/collaborators) and how you will support them throughout their studies.

Joint degree award

Students that are undertaking a standard studentship with associate partner in collaboration with UWE/Bristol will be eligible for a joint degree award (subject to meeting both institution's requirements for a PhD). The student 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 the studentship. The lead supervisor based at Bristol will be responsible in communicating to the supervisory team about key information, requirements and dates related to the studentship. Further details related to the joint degree award will have been communicated to both student and supervisor when the offer was made.

Training needs analysis (TNA)

As a main/academic supervisor it is expected that your student will complete a training needs analysis with you as part of your institutional requirements. For the DTP we request that this is completed by the **end of October/early November**.

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

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

We strongly encourage you to review your student's training progress at yearly points, if not more frequently, to ensure their professional development remains an important aspect of their overall PhD training experience.

Mandatory taught first year

As part of the programme, the student will be required to undertake a taught first year. Further information about this can be found in the [SWBio DTP Taught Handbook](#).

To help you keep up to date with when co-localised teaching is taking place and assessment deadlines, we have a calendar overlay that you can add to your Outlook calendar.

To do this you go to your calendar > **add calendar** > **subscribe from web** and put in the below link:

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/0a74e44c617f4ac185553aff4000b74d@bristol.ac.uk/9d25788983b3412ebeed787d5ad72dff8211289816627360172/calendar.ics>

When adding the overlay into your calendar make sure you include no additional spaces when copying and pasting the link. It also may take 24 hours for the calendar to appear

The taught component is an accredited taught year at Masters level. **Your student will need to pass the taught component to allow them to progress to their second year of studies** (180 credit points; 50% pass mark for each unit). If your student fails, they will not be able to continue their studies as part of the programme.

Feedback on assessments

We understand that your student may be in contact to ask for advice and feedback about their work. However, for work that is to be submitted and assessed, you should not be providing your student with detailed feedback.

Specifically, for the Rotation Project Reports, rotation project supervisors can expect a draft of the report from the student at least a week in advance of the submission deadline. Please do comment on this draft and give general feedback, but please do not suggest detailed edits of the text. It is expected that you will read a draft once only, and please do not accept drafts after the one week deadline. The students have been told that the earlier they give you a draft of their report, the longer they will have to act on the feedback that you give them. The student should not ask for feedback from other supervisors within their supervisory team.

Marking expectations

Rotation Projects

At the end of the Rotation Project, a 5000 word report will need to be completed by the student. The following supervisors will be expected to mark their student's Rotation Project report.

- **Standard/CASE studentship with university:** Listed main and second supervisor
- **Standard/CASE studentship with Rothamsted:** Listed academic supervisor and second local academic supervisor
- **Standard studentship with associate partner:** Listed lead supervisors (if one lead supervisor is based at a research organisation, the university lead supervisor and second local university supervisor)

Please ensure this is completed promptly and by the deadline of which you will be informed.

Rotation project supervisors will be required to provide a continuous assessment mark for the student. For projects where the rotation project supervisor is a non-SWBio DTP university member of staff, the main supervisor at the registered university is expected to provide the mark in consultation with the rotation project supervisor.

Marking will normally occur **in February/March for Rotation Project 1 and July/August for Rotation Project 2**, with **approximately a 3-4 week marking deadline**. If for whatever reason you are unable to provide the marking by the deadline, it is your responsibility to provide a suitable delegate in a timely manner to the taught year administration team (fls-taught@bristol.ac.uk).

Grant Application

The listed main supervisor at the registered university (academic supervisor for Rothamsted based students) will be expected to mark their student's grant application assessment for the Science in Society, Business and Industry taught unit.

Deadlines associated with marking will be included in your calendar at the start of the year by our Taught Year administration team (based at Bristol). You will also receive communications from this team and/or Unit Directors throughout the year in relation to marking.

Marking will normally occur **in January/February** with **approximately a 2-week marking deadline**.

You must complete any marking by the designated deadline as otherwise it will cause significant difficulties and impact on your students training. If for unforeseen circumstances you are unable to, please contact the taught year administration team (fls-taught@bristol.ac.uk) as soon as possible to discuss further.

Supervisors who do not meet these marking deadlines are unlikely to be considered appropriate supervisors for future SWBio DTP studentships.

Note: Members of the supervisory team may also be requested to be part of the local selection panel for SWBio DTP interview days and to assist in teaching.

Rotation projects

The two rotation project outlines will need to be finalised by **July** (two months before the student's start). It is encouraged that these are designed with the student's input following the '[SWBio DTP's Expectations of Rotation Projects](#)' document. An example rotation project form can be found in Appendix 2. This information will be completed online and your local DTP [Implementation Group representative](#) will review.

It is expected that:

- rotation projects are carried out as stated in the submitted form that was approved by the DTP. However, if there is a reason why this is no longer viable, please contact the Rotation Project Unit Director to discuss further.
- rotation projects will normally be with the main supervisory team. For studentships with a non-academic (CASE) partner, one of the Rotation Projects can take place with the listed CASE supervisor.
- rotation projects supervisors meet weekly with the student. It is recommended that these meetings are recorded within a calendar.

The listed rotation project supervisors must ensure that the research associated with the Rotation Projects does not interfere with the student completing their taught units. Note that students will be required to travel for some of the taught units but these will be in pre-defined short, intensive teaching blocks. Please refer to the [SWBio DTP Taught Handbook](#) for details of the timetable.

If the rotation projects are based at different institutions, it is the main/Rothamsted/lead supervisor's responsibility to discuss this with the student in a timely manner so that they can consider accommodation options.

Project refinement

Upon nearing the completion of the taught first year there will be the opportunity for you, with your student, to reflect on the experience gained from the two rotation projects and to refine the PhD project. Where feasible, you are encouraged to respond positively to preferences expressed by the student in view of their rotation project experiences.

If the project is refined, you will be required to submit an online short project refinement form (an example form can be found in Appendix 3) **in August**.

To help with the transition between the rotation projects into the main PhD project, all students will undertake a project management course. They will be asked to complete some project planning documents (for example Gantt chart/scoping document), of which will need to be submitted to the DTP shortly after the end of the project refinement period **in September** and needs to be approved by the main supervisory team.

Following the project refinement period, a meeting will then be arranged shortly afterwards between your student and your local DTP Implementation Group representative to talk through the project, discuss their training needs and for the opportunity to feedback on their first year.

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*. The aim of the PIPS is for your student to understand the context of their research and to expose them to the range of opportunities in which they can apply their skills and training after they graduate. Further information about this placement scheme can be found on the [SWBio DTP website](#). Students have found supervisors to be a good source for identifying placements through their own contacts.

The placement should take place during the **second or third year** of their studies. Your student should discuss the placement with you before approving via the DTP and signing their PIPS contract. Once your student signs their contract, it is expected that they will fulfil the requirements of their PIPS during the specified duration.

As a main/Rothamsted/lead supervisor it is your duty to maintain contact with the student throughout their placement (at least monthly), even though they may not be actively undertaking research. **It is also expected that your student will arrange a visit (in person or virtual) with you and their PIPS supervisor to discuss and reflect on the progress of their placement.** You will also be required to complete a visitor report which will need to be returned to swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk shortly following the visit.

[Further information for supervisors about PIPS placements >>](#)

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

Cohort activities

As part of this programme, there will be [DTP cohort activities](#) that your student is expected to attend. These activities bring all students together 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
- Theme-specific activities e.g. site visits, workshops
- Thesis Boot Camp

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

Further cohort activities may become available during their studies.

Please refer to our [DTP cohort events calendar](#) on the SWBio DTP website for dates of the cohort activities and attendance expectations. We also have a cohort activities calendar overlay which you can add to your Outlook calendar.

To add go to your calendar > **add calendar** > **subscribe from web** and put in the below link:

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/0a74e44c617f4ac185553aff4000b74d@bristol.ac.uk/3b8eee4557254a2b97438390e20a753c1815893121222959471/calendar.ics>

When adding the overlay into your calendar make sure you include no additional spaces when copying and pasting the link. It also may take 24 hours for the calendar to appear

It is expected that you will ensure that your student's research and other activities do not interfere with their attendance at these cohort activities. It is also important that you encourage and support their compulsory attendance at these activities. **Supervisors who actively discourage students from engaging with the programme are unlikely to be considered appropriate supervisors for future SWBio DTP studentships.**

Other

SYSMIC and Learn to Discover (L2D)

Students 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 students 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 student's individual RTSG)	£850	£1000

Due to the time investment if your student chooses to do SYSMIC we strongly recommend that they undertake this course in the second or third year of studies. However, if undertaking a project that includes substantial systems-based computational modelling, such that it is beneficial for them to undertake this course in their first year, please contact swbio-dtp@bristol.ac.uk to discuss this further.

If they wish to undertake this in your first year, we recommend a May rather than a November start due to the workload associated with taught units and assessments.

Researchfish

[Researchfish](#) has recently been implemented as a system by the BBSRC to gather information from BBSRC-funded researchers and students about the outcomes, outputs and impact of their work.

Your student will be invited to enter and submit data to Researchfish. Your student will receive log-in details **early September** as they are just about to **start their third year** of studies. They will be required to submit data annually throughout their studies and they are also encouraged to complete Researchfish for up to three years following completion of their studentship. Please ensure you speak with your student and/or encourage them undertake available training at their institution or online before completing Researchfish for the first time. If you are connecting any of your students to your Researchfish outcomes, please make it very clear that the outcome is directly linked to yourself. We have encountered issues where it is not clear that it is a supervisor rather than a student outcome when collating data.

Main/academic/lead supervisors will have been given access to the student's Researchfish account as a team member, to offer guidance. For Rothamsted supervisors, your student will need to manually add you to their account. Additional supervisors can be added as 'team members'.

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](#)

In vivo skills awards

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

The majority of awards will be to the value of £5k, although larger amounts will be considered if justifiable.

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.

Following completion of the research, a report with a transaction list will need to be submitted to the DTP Administrative Hub before the costs incurred can be approved.

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 >>](#)

Finance

As part of the studentship, there is a Research and Training Support Grant (RTSG) available. The RTSG is to support 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**
- Year two-four: **£14,000 in total**

Note: if the RTSG budget is underspent in the first year, this can be carried over into the following years of the project.

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

- **£1,000** for the 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 the fieldwork budget will not be accessed until year 2 of your student's studies.

There is flexibility within the fieldwork budget, so if the student underspends their PIPS budget, they will have extra money to spend on fieldwork/conferences and vice versa. If they exceed their fieldwork budget, they can use the RTSG to cover these costs, but this is at the discretion of you as the supervisors.

As a supervisor, you are expected to monitor your budgets in liaison with your student. If the student is working across institutions (most applicable for Rothamsted hosted students and Standard studentships with associate partner), it is the responsibility of the relevant supervisors to agree budgets and to liaise with local finance teams to inform them how the RTSG will be managed. Very importantly, this is to ensure that there is not overspending on student budgets.

Laptop

Each new student will be provided with a standard specification laptop at the beginning of their programme via their institution. If you require your student to have an upgrade or a Mac, these additional costs will also need to be met via the RTSG and justification will be needed.

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 their academic progress. If they will be undertaking paid work, we ask that they consult with their supervisor, bearing in mind the impact that it may have on their 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 – student to speak with supervisor
- [Bristol](#)
- [Cardiff](#)
- [Exeter](#)
- [Swansea](#)
- [UWE](#)

Some of the terminology used by the universities refer to additional paid work incorrectly as 'part time' work. Please note the mode of study of your student i.e. a full-time student is 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](#).

Student financial support

Whilst undertaking activities related to their PhD project and training, there may be costs associated (e.g. travel, accommodation, registration costs). Do make it clear to your student how these costs would be covered from their studentship budgets/partners and that they are not expected to cover these costs themselves. Please do also point them in the direction of their local finance teams so they are aware how the university can support them with these costs in the first instance. Students may often be in the situation where they are not always able to pay for costs upfront and claim back later.

Here are some useful resources to help support your student if they are facing financial difficulties at any stage of their PhD studies:

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

Sharing of data

As you are aware, the doctoral training programme your student is undertaking will include collaboration between the University of Bristol, other universities, research organisations and other partners (including the BBSRC). As a result, we may need to share information about the project, the supervisors and the student (which may include student personal data) with those partners.

Personal data is processed in accordance with the current Data Protection Act. The University of Bristol will remain a data controller for the personal data it holds, other universities, research organisations and/or partners may also become data controllers for the relevant personal data they receive a result of their participation with the collaborative programme of doctoral training. The processing and storage of personal data may occur outside of the EEA.

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

Additional information

- [SWBio DTP LinkedIn Group](#)
- Twitter: @SWBio_DTP
- [Information for supervisors](#) can be found on the SWBio DTP website (for example the Supervisor Handbook, DTP expectations, key dates, forms for when requesting changes to projects)

Appendix 1: SWBio DTP Expectations of Supervisors

The BBSRC-funded South West Biosciences Doctoral Training Partnership (SWBio DTP) student you are supervising 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).

You (as the main/Rothamsted/lead supervisor) and your supervisory team agree to:

- follow the programme requirements as described in the [SWBio DTP Supervisor Handbook](#).
- abide by the terms and conditions of the funder:
 - [UKRI Terms and Conditions of training grants and training grant guidance](#)
- ensure that the rotation projects do not interfere with attendance at the taught units or assessments during your student's taught year.
- mark rotation project reports (and any other assessments as requested* from time to time) from across the partnership as part of the taught first year.
- assist in teaching (if requested*).
- allow and encourage your student to attend DTP cohort activities and ensure that research and other training/fieldwork activities do not interfere with these.
- keep in regular contact with your student throughout their studies, this is of particular importance during the writing of their thesis.
- ensure your student submits their thesis within four years.
- ensure that the PhD project remains within [BBSRC remit](#).
- alert and discuss with your local Management/Implementation Group representative if any of the following occur:
 - significant change in project direction
 - intended change in main supervisory team
 - change in mode of study of your student
 - introduction/loss of a CASE partner
 - progression issues

Note: Change in supervisors/project direction and introduction of a CASE partner will need to be approved by the Management Group. Further information can be found on the [SWBio DTP website](#) including the relevant forms to complete.

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

- support your student in undertaking a placement as part of the [Professional Internships for PhD Students \(PIPS\)](#) scheme. This will require you to:
 - ensure the placement takes place in the second or third year of their studies.
 - allow your student to complete their placement within the designated dates as outlined in the job description.
 - maintain contact with your student throughout their placement.
 - visit/skype your student whilst on their placement and complete the relevant visitor form.
 - ensure they have completed their BBSRC PIPS report within 3 months of completing their PIPS (your student needs to contact PIPS@bbsrc.ac.uk to obtain their report).

Note: The PIPS placement is optional if the project has an affiliated CASE partner.

For CASE Studentships:

Support your student in undertaking a CASE placement. This will require you to:

- ensure that the student undertakes their placement with the CASE partner (3 months minimum – 18 months maximum).
- ensure that a SWBio DTP CASE studentship agreement is set up between the relevant parties.
- maintain contact with your student throughout their placement (we recommend monthly).
- visit/skype your student whilst on their placement and complete the relevant visitor form.
- ensure your student has completed their [BBSRC CASE report](#) following their CASE placement (your student needs to contact CASE@bbsrc.ac.uk to obtain their report).
- **Note: The PIPS placement is optional if the project has an affiliated CASE partner.**

*Requests made will be reasonable

Importantly,

- **studentships are awarded on the basis of a programme of study agreed by our funders and based within the SWBio DTP institutions. It is an expectation of the BBSRC that students are primarily based at the respective SWBio DTP partner institution for the duration of their PhD. It is therefore unlikely that the SWBio DTP will agree the transfer of a studentship away from our partnership institutions in the event that a supervisor moves away from our network.**
- **Research placements are acceptable where these benefit the programme of research and have a clearly measurable potential outcome, but would normally expected to be of short duration. Students must still fully engage with the programme during this period.**

It is the responsibility of the main/Rothamsted/lead supervisor to cascade this document and other relevant SWBio DTP communications to the rest of the supervisory team.

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

Appendix 2: **Example** Rotation Project Form

Students in the SWBio DTP programme undertake two Rotation Projects during their taught first year.

- Rotation Project 1 will be part-time (September-February)
- Rotation Project 2 will be full-time (March-July)

You will have previously provided details of potential Rotation Projects as part of your original project pro-forma. This was to ensure some level of planning was undertaken in advance. However, **we do value the students' input into these Rotation Projects** and therefore we ask for you to discuss these potential rotation projects with your student further and to provide the final Rotation Project details below.

As outlined in the 'SWBio DTP Expectations of Supervisors' document (which you have agreed to abide to by accepting a studentship), please take into account the taught units and other DTP cohort activities when planning your rotation projects.

Note: where possible, students may be able to use their experiences with the Rotation Projects to refine their PhD projects on which they will concentrate from August of their first year. You will be notified by the DTP Hub ahead of this project refinement period.

Where mainly based (i.e. host institution): For Standard studentships with associate partner, please list the registered university.

Student name:

Supervisor name who has completed this form:

PhD project description: Please copy and paste description from your original project pro-forma.

Please confirm that you have discussed with the student their Rotation Projects: Please ensure this includes, for example, any time spent away from their host institution, accommodation requirements.

Note: it is expected that any accommodation/travel arrangements needed for a Rotation Project away from the host institution are arranged by the student in liaison with their Rotation Project supervisor.

Rotation project 1 (Part-time, Sept-Mar)

Project title:

Supervisor (*including affiliation and role in supervisory team*): Only one supervisor to be listed.

Location:

Only complete if the student is not based at the host institution for the rotation project.

Approximate accommodation and travel costs:

Please x to confirm that you have identified additional support to cover accommodation/travel costs if the £1k budget is exceeded.

Main objective of the Rotation Project:

Brief description (approximately 200 words):

Experimental techniques/training that this Rotation Project will offer (just brief bullet points).

Rotation project 2 (Full-time, Apr-Jul)

Project title:
Supervisor (*including affiliation and role in supervisory team*): Only one supervisor to be listed.
Location:

Only complete if the student is not based at the host institution for the rotation project.

Approximate accommodation and travel costs:
Please x to confirm that you have identified additional support to cover accommodation/travel costs if the £1k budget is exceeded.

Main objective of the Rotation Project:

Brief description (approximately 200 words):

Experimental techniques/training that this Rotation Project will offer (just brief bullet points).

Appendix 3: **Example** Project Refinement Form

At the end of the taught first year, there is the opportunity for you with your student to reflect on the experience gained from the two rotation projects and to refine the proposed PhD project.

Where feasible, you are encouraged to respond positively to preferences expressed by the student in view of their rotation project experiences.

1. Student name:												
2. Project title: Please list the new project title if this has now changed												
3. Supervisor's name who has completed this form:												
<p>4. Research theme Please x the box for the research theme(s) that the project now sits under. Please choose only <u>one</u> main theme but you can list more than one sub-theme.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="padding: 5px;">Research theme</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Main theme (choose only 1)</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Secondary theme</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Agriculture and the Environment</td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Animal Behaviour and <i>In Vivo</i> Studies</td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Biophysical and Biomolecular Studies</td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Research theme	Main theme (choose only 1)	Secondary theme	Agriculture and the Environment			Animal Behaviour and <i>In Vivo</i> Studies			Biophysical and Biomolecular Studies		
Research theme	Main theme (choose only 1)	Secondary theme										
Agriculture and the Environment												
Animal Behaviour and <i>In Vivo</i> Studies												
Biophysical and Biomolecular Studies												
5. Project description (maximum of 400 words):												
<p>6. Training needs: <i>In response to the refinement of the project, please consider any new training that may now be required.</i></p> <p>Please x this box to confirm that you have you discussed a work plan with your student for the next 3 years of their studies? <input style="float: right;" type="checkbox"/></p>												
7. Requested changes: Please confirm in response to the project refinement whether there will be a request for:												

- a significant change in direction of the project?

Yes / No (*please delete as appropriate*)

If yes, please list the changes:

- a change in the main supervisory team?

Yes / No (*please delete as appropriate*)

If yes, please list the changes:

Note: If the answer is yes to one or both of these questions, a '[change to project direction/main supervisory team](#)' form will need to be completed. The requested changes will then need to be approved by the SWBio DTP Management Group.

* Significant change

(i) If there has been a change in the subject of the project as classified by Je-S:

Animal Systems, Health and Wellbeing / Plants, Microbes, Food and Sustainability / Technologies and Methodological Development / Molecules, Cells and Industrial Biotechnology

(ii) If there is a risk of the changed project being outside of BBSRC remit

(iii) If the strategic priority area of the project changes i.e. Agriculture and Food Security to World-class Underpinning Biosciences.

Appendix 4: 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 cohort event - at some point during this period						Project refinement period + 1-1 meeting with IG rep	
		Institutional inductions + cohort event			Optional: Research Theme Activity - at some point during this period							
		Complete TNA: end of Oct										
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)