

WGSSS STUDENTSHIP APPLICATION FORM 2026

This WGSSS Application Form for ESRC doctoral studentship awards focuses on your proposed programme of research and your potential for doctoral-level research. The form asks you for a range of information, and you should complete all of the fields that apply to your individual circumstances.

Sections 1-6 of this form must be completed by you as the applicant. However, we encourage you to discuss your application with your supervisor and allow enough time to develop a robust proposal and programme of research. Section 7 must be completed by the supervisor who has agreed to supervise your project.

It is vital that you take into account the deadlines for the application process, which are detailed on the [WGSSS website](#). Please also be aware that individual universities often have internal deadlines for applications, so do seek guidance from the pathway or school department you are applying to and make sure that you allow plenty of time to complete the application.

You can only submit one project proposal and application for WGSSS funding in the General Studentship Competition. Applicants are not permitted to submit multiple applications across our partner universities.

Please ensure that you observe the word limits for each field, as set out in the form. WGSSS reserves the right to reject over-length applications outright. Applicants are not permitted to include images or graphs within their application.

Please visit the [studentships page](#) for further information.

SECTION 1 – APPLICANT DETAILS

Title:	<input type="text"/>	First Name:	<input type="text"/>	Surname:	<input type="text"/>
Preferred Name:	<input type="text"/>				
University:	<input type="text"/>				
WGSSS Pathway:	<input type="text"/>				
Personal Email:	<input type="text"/>				

SECTION 2 – ELIGIBILITY

All international students are eligible for a full WGSSS award consisting of a maintenance stipend and payment of tuition fees at the UK research organisation rate.

Applicants must satisfy UKRI studentship eligibility requirements. For further details see the [UKRI website](#).

Please indicate below whether you are classed as a Home or International student. If you are unsure please first contact the admissions team in the university you are applying to. (please check the box)

International: ☐

Home: ☐

Please note that the WGSSS is not permitted to pay for travel costs, visa fees and other associated costs with moving to the UK to study (e.g., immigration health surcharge to access the National Health Service) and that there may be restrictions on who can travel to the UK with you, especially if there is a need to study for a Masters year. It is recommended that contact is made with the institution to which you are applying should you have any queries.

If a student already holds an award from or is otherwise financially supported by, another organisation (including receipt of prior PhD funding from a UKRI Research Council) and the ESRC considers that award, or other forms of support, to be sufficient to cover maintenance and/or tuition fees, the student will not be eligible for an award from the ESRC.

I confirm that I am not currently in receipt of financial support. (please check the box)

☐

Students are expected to have qualifications or experience equivalent to a first or upper second-class bachelors degree or masters degree from a UK institution.

Please indicate whether you have qualifications or experience that meet our minimum requirements. If you are unsure, please first contact the admissions team at the university you are applying to.

I confirm that I have qualifications or experience equivalent to a first or upper-second-class bachelors degree or masters degree from a UK institution (please check the box)

☐

Please complete this section only if you are continuing a PhD project. For candidates who have already started a doctorate programme (either currently or in the past), it is a WGSSS requirement that applicants must not be more than 1 year (full-time or the part-time equivalent) into an unfunded PhD programme by the date of studentship commencement.

Continuing PhD Project declaration

1. I confirm that I am a continuing PhD student and will have completed no more than one year of prior unfunded study at the point of award commencement. (please check the box)

☐

2. I confirm that my application is to continue the same PhD research project. This continuation has been discussed and confirmed with my lead supervisor. (please check the box)

☐

Supervisor Confirmation:

Applicants selecting **declaration 2** must ensure that their lead supervisor provides separate written confirmation that the continuation of the same project is appropriate and will be able to be supported in accordance with applicable institutional regulations.

SECTION 3 – WELSH LANGUAGE

This section should be completed by those applying for the WGSSS and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol co-funded studentship only. If you are not applying for the WGSSS and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol award, please move on to section 4.

All applicants applying to the WGSSS and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol co-funded studentship must conduct their research and complete the PhD in Welsh.

Applicants must have competence in Welsh equivalent to the C1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Please include in the box below any relevant Welsh qualifications or qualifications completed through the medium of Welsh, or provide any other evidence of competency in Welsh (e.g. first-language Welsh-speaker, but brought up and educated outside of Wales)

SECTION 4 – ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

This section is for you to provide information about your project proposal. Applicants are not permitted to include graphics, charts, or images within their proposal.

Project Title:

Provide a short overview of the project. This should include the aims and purpose of the research.
(300 words max)

Please provide a brief overview of the academic literature relevant to your field.
(300 words max)

Outline the project's research design. Include details about the research method(s) you will use, and how the proposed research design will enable you to address the research problem and/or research questions detailed above. Please consider the feasibility of your project ie. access, ethics, risk assessment.

(300 words max)

Please provide details of the contribution that your project will make to academic knowledge.

(300 words max)

Bibliographic References

DIFFICULT LANGUAGE TRAINING

Please complete this section if the project requires any [Difficult Language Training \(DLT\)](#).

Which language do you intend to study?	
Please confirm the language group (A-D)	
Please state how this language training will be beneficial to the completion of your funded research studies. (150 words max)	

OVERSEAS FIELDWORK

Please complete this section if the project requires any [Overseas Fieldwork](#).

Please provide the location(s) of the intended overseas fieldwork.	
Briefly explain the purpose of the overseas fieldwork. (150 words max)	

SECTION 5 – Personal Statement

Set out your reasons and motivation for applying to study at your chosen University and Pathway.

(300 words max)

Please detail your understanding and expectations of doctoral study.

(300 words max)

Provide details of your academic interests generally, and particularly of those relating to your proposed research.

(300 words max)

Drawing on your background (including your life experiences, journey to/through university, work experiences, or volunteering) please provide a summary of why you are ready to undertake a PhD now and how you will flourish as a result of PhD funding.

You might include, for example, personal challenges that you have overcome or achievements that you are proud of in your work, study, or life experiences and how these map onto the skills required to flourish in a PhD programme and make a positive contribution to WGSSS.

Challenges could include, but are not limited to, protected characteristics, socio-economic status, being a prospective first-generation student, or care-experienced.

(200 words max)

Reflecting on your own background and/or proposed approach to PhD study and the opportunities which it will present, how will you support diversity and inclusion in the PhD community?

(200 words max)

SECTION 6 – EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY DATA

WGSSS is required to report on Equality and Diversity data to the ESRC, the government research council that funds WGSSS. Before you submit your application, please complete the [linked WGSSS EDI Data Form](#). You may be required to complete a separate form when submitting your application to your host institution.

Applicant data to be collected includes information on the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: sex, age, disability, race, and sexual orientation. This data will be held confidentially and reported anonymously to the ESRC. This data will be held separately from your application and is collected for statistical reporting to the ESRC only.

Please check this box to confirm that you have completed the WGSSS Equality and Diversity Data form ☐

In line with [WGSSS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) strategy](#) and commitment to addressing underrepresentation in its student cohorts, and by way of ‘positive action’ permitted under the Equality Act 2010, an additional applicant per pathway may be entered into the General Studentship Competition provided that at least one of those is:

- Black British
- Asian British
- minority ethnic British
- mixed-race British.

If you identify as coming within one of the above categories, please check the relevant box. (Please check box)

Yes: ☐

No: ☐

SECTION 7 – SUPERVISORY TEAM

This section is to be completed by the supervisor who has agreed to supervise your project. **This section must be completed before your application is submitted.**

FIRST/LEAD SUPERVISOR (MANDATORY)	
Full Name	
Institution	
Department	
Email Address	
Please provide details of the supervisor's research focus and how this relates to the proposed research project. (200 words max)	
Early Career Researcher Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>	

SECOND/CO SUPERVISOR (MANDATORY)	
Full Name	
Institution	
Department	
Email Address	

Please provide details of the supervisor's research focus and how this relates to the proposed research project.

(200 words max)

Early Career Researcher

Yes: ☐

No: ☐

THIRD SUPERVISOR (OPTIONAL)

Full Name

Institution

Department

Email Address

Please provide details of the supervisor's research focus and how this relates to the proposed research project.

(200 words max)

Early Career Researcher

Yes: ☐

No: ☐

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Thank you for taking the time to complete the WGSSS Studentship Application Form.

Along with the WGSSS Student Application form, we also require the following documents to support your application:

1. Academic CV
2. Two Academic or Professional References
3. Degree certificates and transcripts

Please attach the above documents and the WGSSS Studentship Application form to your university application as a **single document by the application deadline.**

Failure to do so may impede or prevent consideration of your application.

END OF FORM