BBSRC TRAINING GRANTS:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

These FAQs are aimed at those who are new to Research Council funding processes, to help them understand more about Research Council Training Grants, and BBSRC's expectations regarding their use.

1 General

1.1 What is a Training Grant?

A Training Grant is a grant awarded for the purpose of supporting postgraduate training. Training Grants are awarded by BBSRC through a number of competitions:

- Doctoral Training Partnership Competition
- Targeted Priority Studentship Competition
- Industrial CASE competition
- Industrial CASE Partnership Competition

Where the Training Grant is awarded to support PhD training, it is often referred to as a 'Doctoral Training Grant' (DTG), or sometimes referred to in connection with the competition it was awarded through: for example an "Industrial CASE DTG" or "DTP Training Grant".

BBSRC began using the Training Grant mechanism on a pilot basis from 2002 in its Quota competition, and a similar mechanism is now used by all Councils. The key feature of Training Grants as used by the Research Councils is that all the funding connected with one or more studentships is awarded in a single grant to the Research Organisation.

Training Grant are covered by a cross-Council set of Terms and Conditions and these are available on the RCUK website:
http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/ResearchCareers/postgrad/Pages/home.aspx /
http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/documents/TermsConditionsTrainingGrants.pdf

1.2 What are the advantages to a Department and Research Organisation?

The principal benefit to a Department, Research Organisation, or Partnership (in the case of DTPs) is the flexibility which a Training Grant provides in how postgraduate training is provided. BBSRC awards its Training Grants on the basis of the value of a number of 4-year PhD studentships, and subject to the terms and conditions of the scheme. The Research Organisations (including departments or partnerships) have the flexibility, for example:

- to offer 4 year studentships or flexible studentships geared to the project and needs of the student
- start students at any point in the academic year;

- draw in funding from other sources by part-funding the student from the Training Grant and part from another source (see below).

The intention is for Research Organisations to hold, or be a partner on, separate, but overlapping, Training Grants, and to be able to draw on the funding flexibly, although the Research Organisation will be expected to account for funds drawn from each Training Grant.

1.3 What is the difference between an MTG, DTG and a DTP?

'Masters Training Grant' (MTG) is a term used to describe a Training Grant awarded for the purposes of supporting students on Masters courses. BBSRC will no longer be funding stand-along Masters courses after the current allocation of MTGs end – the last competition was in 2009. The currently awarded MTGs cover students intakes in 2010, 2011 and 2012, and these grants are governed by standard Training Grant terms and conditions, covering both 'Masters Training Grants' and 'Doctoral Training Grants'.

'Doctoral Training Grant' is the term used to refer to the actual funding grant awarded to a Research Organisation by a Research Council to support PhD students. BBSRC awards all its Training Grants through competitions, while some other Councils award Training Grants automatically each year on the basis of a Research Organisations research funding. Therefore, just as BBSRC awards Training Grants through its annual Industrial CASE competition, or previously through its Quota competition, the DTP scheme is a competitive process which will lead to the award of major Training Grants to successful Research Organisations. The funding awards made through the DTP scheme will be known as *DTP Training Grants*, and they will be subject to standard financial controls and Final Expenditure Statement reconciliation.

The main changes under the DTP scheme, addressed in more detail within the subsequent FAQs, are:

- Institutional or multi-institutional bids only.
- A lower number of separate awards, no more than 20 DTPs.
- There is no mandatory requirement to create CASE studentships from the DTP Training Grant, though this is permitted and encouraged.
- The Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) figure used in studentships has been increased to £5k p.a. compared to the previous figure of £1k p.a. (this applies to *all* new BBSRC studentships awarded from October 2011).

1.4 How are Training Grant funds allocated?

All Training Grant funding is allocated through the BBSRC's studentship competitions. BBSRC does not use an algorithm based allocation process BBSRC takes this approach in order to ensure that it is investing in excellent research training environments for students.

2 Grant Arrangements

2.1 What will be the grant start date?

The date is 1 October of the first academic year covered by the Training Grant.

2.2 What is the duration of the grant?

This will be specified in the award letter. The Training Grant awarded through the Doctoral Training Partnership competition provides for three years of intakes on 4-year studentships, and so the total length of the grant is six academic years. Note that this covers seven financial years in terms of the Research Councils (April – March financial year). Where a Training Grant covers only a single PhD intake, the duration of the grant will accordingly be shorter.

2.3 What happens if the student's period of support goes beyond the end of the grant?

The balance of the funding should be made from a subsequent Training Grant, or from another source. A Training Grant is cash-limited and will not be supplemented or extended for this reason.

2.4 Can we fund a student who wants to start in September or earlier?

In relation to the start date for a Training Grant, a student can be started earlier in the year, but BBSRC will not start the grant earlier. Funds will not be released early. The DTP Training Grant awards extend over three annual intakes, however, and so once the grant has started the Research Organisation has the flexibility to begin funding a student at any time within the period covered by the Training Grant.

2.5 What happens if we take on a veterinary student who qualifies for the higher stipend - we will be short of funds?

As a BBSRC requirement any veterinary graduate funded through a BBRSC Doctoral Training Grant is entitled to the higher rate stipend applicable at the time. Normally BBSRC would expect these costs to be met from within the overall cash limit of the Training Grant. This is particularly so with the flexibility afforded within the larger grants. However BBSRC recognises that such flexibility does not always exist when say only one or two studentships are fundable through an award. Where this is the case BBSRC is prepared to consider extra funding that cannot be met from the awarded funds. In order to request extra funding the Research Organisation must demonstrate that it lacks the flexibility within its Training Grant

to meet these costs and that it has no other contingency funding or concurrent Training Grants on which it could draw.

A form for claiming funds as a result of extra costs associated with paying a higher stipend to a veterinary graduate needs to be attached to the final expenditure statement which can be found at **http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/studentships/studentships-index.aspx**

The veterinary stipend rate for 2013/14 is £21,180.

2.6 What provision is made for additional costs incurred as a result of maternity leave?

As detailed in the RCUK Terms and Conditions of Research Council Training Grants, students receiving a stipend from a Research Council Training Grant are entitled to receive stipend support during periods of maternity leave and to have their studentship extended by a commensurate period.

The additional costs incurred should normally be met from within the cash-limit of the Training Account (comprising all BBSRC Training Grants). For the majority of Research Organisations, which have significant concurrent Training Grants and the expectation of regular funding in the future, this should cause no difficulties and Councils would not expect or accept any additional claims. For those Research Organisations without such flexibility (eg a very small Training Grant and no expectation of future funding), then Councils will consider requests for additional funding above the cash-limit when this can be shown to be unavoidable. In order to request extra funding the Research Organisation will need to demonstrate that it lacks flexibility within its Training Grant to meet the costs of maternity support and that it has no or other contingency funding or concurrent Training Grants on which it could draw.

2.7 Can a Research Organisation claim additional costs due to a shortage of funds within the Grant if a student has been on an agreed Policy Placement?

The BBSRC will meet any shortfall that cannot be met from within the cash limit of the Training Grant providing it is as a result of paying for the cost of the Policy Placement.

Normally BBSRC would expect these costs to be met from within the overall cash limit of the Training Grant. This is particularly so with the flexibility afforded within the larger grants. However BBSRC recognises that such flexibility does not always exist when say only one or two studentships are fundable through an award. Where this is the case BBSRC is prepared to consider extra funding that cannot be met from the awarded funds. In order to request extra funding it is a requirement that the Research Organisation must demonstrate that it lacks the flexibility within its Training Grant to meet these costs and that it has no other contingency funding or concurrent Training Grants on which it could draw.

A form for claiming funds as a result of these extra costs needs to be attached to the final expenditure statement which can be found at
http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/studentships/studentships-index.aspx

3 Use of the funding

3.1 Can I use the funding in any way I choose?

No. As with any Research Council grant, the funding is awarded subject to terms and conditions governing the use of the funding. The terms and conditions governing Training Grants have been agreed cross-Council. These terms and conditions specify the formal 'minimum' conditions for the correct use of the funding, and indicate the formal limits to the flexibility which the Training Grant offers to a Research Organisation.

You also need to bear in mind the purpose of the award as determined by the competition in which it was awarded. For example, the Targeted Priority Studentship Training Grants (i.e. Training Grants awarded through a Targeted Priority Studentship competition) are awarded to support research training in specified priority areas, whereas the Doctoral Training Partnership Training Grants give Research Organisations greater autonomy in determining the areas of the individual student projects within BBSRC remit, in accordance with their Portfolio Agreement.

In addition, however, BBSRC expects Research Organisations to use the flexibility of Training Grant funding for maximum *strategic* effect, and to think strategically about how *best* to maximise the impact of BBSRC's investment in the Research Organisation. This might include using the flexibility of part-funding to gear in funding from other sources, or offering enhanced stipends to attract the strongest candidates in areas of science in which a Research Organisation may have been experiencing recruitment difficulties. Several of the following FAQs provide information regarding BBSRC's views as to good practice in this area.

3.2 Do I have to create only 3-year or 4-year studentships? Can I create a shorter studentship geared to the project and needs of the student?

No to the first; yes, to the second. When BBSRC first introduced its 4-year PhD funding as standard it encouraged Research Organisations to create 4-year studentships, and only use shorter studentships in specific circumstances (e.g. where the student had significant prior experience). Following a recommendation from the Evaluation of BBSRC's Quota DTG scheme, we are happy for Research Organisations to exercise more flexibility here.

However, we still envisage that a significant proportion of studentships need to be 4 year in view of the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of bioscience research, and the need to provide students with challenging projects. Research Organisations should seek to ensure that students finish their research within the time period agreed for the project.

3.3 Why do we need to decide upfront about the duration of a studentship?

It is important that students are given a clear statement at the beginning of their studentship of the length of funding they can expect. A Research Organisations offer to a candidate should contain a clear statement of the details of the studentship support being offered. (You should also refer to Precept 9 of the *QAA's Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Programmes* regarding the offer letter, and its role in constituting a contract between the student and the Research Organisation.)

Any such statement should make clear, for example, that continued receipt of the studentship is subject to satisfactory progress, as monitored through a Research Organisations progress monitoring procedures. With 4-year studentships, some Research Organisations state clear progression requirements toward submission in the final year for continued receipt of funding. If a student completes in less than 4 years, then the Research Organisation retains the funding in its Training Grant, of course for use with other BBSRC student support.

3.4 If we offer a 3-year studentship, can we extend the funding period later on?

Normally a student should be supervised, and their progress monitored, towards submission within 3 years where a 3-year studentship has been offered. The drift towards the majority of students requiring a fourth year has led to an unfortunate practice of the 'writing-up year', where, in the worst cases, a student is left with no stipend in order to complete their project. The introduction of 4-year studentships is intended to end this practice; and so 3-year studentships should mean a research project which is managed to completion (i.e. submission of the thesis) in 3 years.

If a 3-year studentship is offered, this does not prevent a Research Organisation having clear procedures for exceptionally extending a studentship later on, on a competitive basis, if the science is showing signs of dramatic new results. If this process is used, then for fairness we would expect to see *all* 3-year studentships in a Research Organisation eligible for extension, irrespective of funder (though BBSRC Training Grant funding could only be used where the studentship is BBSRC funded).

The completion of a project within a specified time-frame is itself, of course, an essential transferable skill (see Domain B of the Researcher Development Statement). Research Organisations should seek to ensure that students normally finish their research within the time period agreed for the projects, and we do not expect to see Research Organisations extending the period of a studentship late in the day, unless exceptionally it can demonstrate that it is seeking to reward excellence and support exciting new research developments in a student's project, as above.

3.5 If I have Training Grant funding for an annual intake of three 4-year studentships, can I use the funding to create four 3-year studentships?

While BBSRC does not wish to be overly prescriptive in the use of Training Grant funding, the intention in providing four years of funding per studentship package is not to allow for the creation of a larger number of three-year studentships. There is now a common perception that three-year studentships are not adequate to allow students to undertake challenging projects in view of the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of bioscience research.

3.6 Can I part-fund a student, i.e. part from the Training Grant and part from another source?

Yes – but there are limits to the part-funding arrangements; see the next question for details.

3.7 Is there a minimum limit to the contribution which must be made from the Training Grant, when a student is being part-funded from a non-Research Council source?

Yes. The Training Grant allows for studentships to be part-funded from the Training Grant, and part-from another source, but in all cases of part-funding *at least 50%* of the total cost (where a stipend is awarded) over the lifetime of the studentship should be funded from the Training Grant. Where a student being funded is eligible only for a fees-only award, *100% of the fees* should be met from the Training Grant over the lifetime of the studentship. It is not permissible, therefore, to provide small sums of funding from the Training Grant to support, for example, a student funded primarily from another source. In other words, every student who is funded from the Training Grant must be funded according to these minimum levels, and they will count on this basis as 'recognised' BBSRC students. Being a recognised BBSRC student is important for the student – for example, it makes them eligible for funding to attend the biotechnology YES competition.

3.8 Can I part-fund a studentship from the Training Grant of another Research Council?

Yes – 50:50 funding from the Training Grants of different Research Councils is permitted, and the cross-council Terms and Conditions provide further details of this. The Training Grant mechanism is particularly useful to facilitate studentships in interdisciplinary / cross-council areas. However, where a studentship is part-funded from the Training Grant of another research council, the Department or Research Organisation holding the BBSRC Training Grant must satisfy itself that sufficient research within the project is within BBSRC remit in order to justify the collaborative arrangement.

3.9 Can I part-fund a studentship from two different Training Grants, e.g. from a Doctoral Training Partnership Training Grant and a Targeted Priority Studentship Training Grant?

Yes, provided the use of the funding in each case is appropriate to the purposes for which the grant was awarded – i.e. it must fit under both awards. The Research Organisation will also need to ensure, however, that it has suitable mechanisms in place to accurately record the funding drawn from each Training Grant.

3.10 Are there any restrictions on the areas of science in which studentships can be supported?

All studentships funded from BBSRC Training Grants must be in BBSRC's scientific remit; or, in the case of jointly funded studentships with another Council, a substantial part of the research training must be in BBSRC's remit. The areas of science permissible will depend on the competition in which the Training Grant was awarded. The Targeted Priority competition awards Training Grants to support research training in priority areas as specified in the competition; the Industrial CASE competition makes awards on the basis of specific collaborative projects, the Doctoral Training Partnership competition makes awards to support studentships in the strategic research areas outlined in the Portfolio Agreements.

3.11 Is there a restriction on whether a student can take on a 4-year studentship if they have already completed more than three years of degree or postgraduate level training?

No. BBSRC wishes Research Organisations to recruit the best eligible students to its studentships, having consideration of the student's expertise and qualifications and their suitability for the particular project.

3.12 Can I use funding from the Training Grant to fund a "writing-up" period?

No. If a studentship project is designed to be three years, this should be managed so as to allow for the writing up of the research within the scope of the project, similarly for a 4-year studentship. In other words, a Research Organisation should not fund a student for 3 / 4 years of laboratory work and then expect the student to have to write up in their own time. The project should be designed and managed to allow for the writing up of the research within the scope of the project itself.

3.13 Can we continue to fund a student from our Training Grant after they have submitted their thesis?

Yes – but only in certain circumstances. Normally the submission of the thesis is taken to mark the end of PhD studies. However, a stipend is by definition funding provided to enable

someone to undertake a period of education or training, and therefore in some circumstances it may still be possible to pay a stipend from the Training Grant where the student is undertaking additional relevant doctoral level education or training after the submission of their thesis. In this case, it would be important for the Research Organisation to have clearly documented requirements for the further period of research training, and ensure that there is a clear end-point to the funding. BBSRC will expect to see clear added-value to funding such a period compared, for example, to using the funding to support a new student.

3.14 Can I use funding from a Doctoral Training Grant to fund Masters level training?

A Training Grant should only be used to support Masters level training where this is an integral part of a doctoral research degree programme. A Training Grant gives the Research Organisation flexibility to tailor a training package to a particular student, and if, as part of that training, the Research Organisation wishes the student to take a course of Masters level modules, then that is allowable. However, a clear offer of a four-year doctoral programme should be made to the student.

It may be particularly appropriate, for example, to include Masters level taught modules as part of the first year of a doctoral research degree programme in interdisciplinary areas. Some degree programmes, such as the 'Integrated PhD' or 'New Route PhD' may also involve taught components at Masters level. Training Grant funding which has been awarded through PhD studentship competitions should not be used, however, to provide stand-alone Masters studentships. Research Organisations should also bear in mind that a four year submission period is expected for all students, irrespective of whether their programmes involve components at Masters level.

3.15 Can I use Training Grant funding to provide student stipends above the research council minimum?

Yes – the Training Grant approach gives the Research Organisation flexibility to provide enhanced stipends within the financial scope of the grant, in order to support its recruitment of the best students.

3.16 Can I use the Training Grant to fund higher research support costs than under a standard research council studentship, and fund fewer studentships?

Yes, it is for Research Organisations to decide the distribution of funds, taking into account the needs of the students and projects funded through the Training Grant, and the broader management of its postgraduate training. Funds may also be used towards the cost of travel associated with conference attendance and fieldwork both within the UK and abroad. The distribution of the funds should be tensioned against these various calls on it. From April 2011, all new starting Training Grants will be awarded on the basis of £5k p.a. research training support costs.

3.17 What happens when a student moves to another department or Research Organisation?

BBSRC expects the department or Research Organisation to come to an agreement about transferring resources (the Training Grant to a department or Research Organisation will not be amended). Essentially, the 'exporting' department or Research Organisation should make an appropriate financial transfer to the new department or Research Organisation to cover the balance of cost of the studentship award. BBSRC expects for both Research Organisations to place paramount importance on the interests of the student in reaching decisions about the transfer of resources.

3.18 How can Research Organisations use the funds allocated for Professional Internships for PhD Students (PIPS):

All BBSRC PhD students funded by a DTP Training Grant must carry out a non-academic work experience placement during their PhD. A contribution of £800 per studentship has been added to the *Total Fieldwork* heading of each DTP Training Grant to contribute to the costs of the PIPS programme. It is acceptable to use these funds to cover the direct costs of PIPS, such as any additional travel and accommodation costs incurred by the student while on placement. Costs in excess of £800 can be charged to the RTSG component of the Training Grant if the need arises.

4 Selection of Students

4.1 What eligibility requirements apply to students funded through Training Grants?

BBSRC does not fund students directly, but funds Research Organisations (ROs) through training grants. Training grants include funding for fees and stipends (maintenance payments for students).

The Research Councils place full reliance on residential eligibility checks undertaken by the RO. When submitting student details to the Student Data Portal, ROs are confirming that they have checked the eligibility of the student to receive the level of funding allocated to them.

Please note that the status of the award (e.g. full or fees-only) is determined at the start of the award and cannot be changed once an award is made.

A guide to student eligibility is available at:
http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/ResearchCareers/postgrad/Pages/home.aspx

4.2 What residency requirements apply to students funded through Training Grants?

To be eligible for a full award (stipend and fees):

A student must have:

- Settled status in the UK, meaning they have no restrictions on how long they can stay

and

- Been 'ordinarily resident' in the UK for 3 years prior to the start of the grant. This means they must have been normally residing in the UK (apart from temporary or occasional absences)

and

- Not been residing in the UK wholly or mainly for the purpose of full-time education. (This does not apply to UK or EU nationals) .

To be eligible for a fees only award:

- Students from EU countries other than the UK are generally eligible for a fees-only award. To be eligible for a fees-only award, a student must be ordinarily resident in a member state of the EU, in the same way as UK students must be ordinarily resident in the UK.

For further information see the the Education (Fees and Awards) (England) Regulations 2007 and subsequent amendments at:
http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/ResearchCareers/postgrad/Pages/home.aspx

4.3 How will the students know that they are funded by the BBSRC?

Since students are no longer directly paid by BBSRC, there is a risk that they may not realise that they are BBSRC-funded students. It is important, therefore, that the Research Organisation make this clear to the students funded from the Training Grant, and one way to do this would be to use the BBSRC logo on relevant award letters or documentation. The BBSRC logo can be downloaded from: www.bbsrc.ac.uk/site/download-logo.aspx

For studentships funded via a Doctoral Training Partnership Training Grant it is anticipated that students will be actively involved in DTP co-hort building activities at the Research Organisation, Partnership and Programme level. It is important; therefore, that the Research Organisations make this clear to the students funded from the DTP Training Grant, and one way to do this would be to use the BBSRC DTP logo on relevant award letters or documentation. The BBSRC DTP logo can be downloaded from:
http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/multimediafiles/dtp.jpg

5 Management of Awards

5.1 What terms and conditions apply to students funded through Training Grants?

The terms and conditions governing Training Grants have been agreed cross-Council. These terms and conditions specify the formal 'minimum' conditions for the correct use of the funding, and indicate the formal limits to the flexibility which the Training Grant offers to a Research Organisation. A copy of the Terms and Conditions of Research Council Training Grants is available on the RCUK website at:

http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/ResearchCareers/postgrad/Pages/home.aspx BBSRC will continue to issue an annual guide to studentships, *BBSRC Postgraduate Studentships,* containing the specific terms and conditions for BBSRC studentships funded from Training Grants. See: www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/studentships/studentships-index.aspx.

In addition, the BBSRC DTP Training Grants have specific terms and conditions relating to reporting and strategic engagement that are contained within the offer of award.

5.2 Can I convert a studentship to CASE?

Yes. BBSRC wishes to encourage collaboration with potential industrial or commercial partners, but this need not require formal "conversion" of a studentship to CASE. Research Organisations should feel free to seek collaboration on Training Grant funded projects with a wide range of partners.

CASE awards are a type of doctoral studentship designed around a collaborative research project and giving the student broader experience within a non-academic setting. The BBSRC vision for CASE is that "CASE awards will provide PhD students with a first-rate, challenging research training experience, within the context of a mutually beneficial research collaboration between academic and partner organisations". The research project undertaken by the student should be agreed between the academic partner and the cooperating body, and the student supervised by staff from both organisations.

In light of the recent CASE evaluation the mandatory requirement for industry to make financial contributions to the student stipend and research project has been modified for CASE studentships starting in 2013. For new awards funded though the annual CASE competition, there is no longer a requirement to enhance the student stipend for any CASE Studentship and the mandatory requirement for financial contribution to the academic partner costs has been modified. For partner organisations of 50 employees or less, there is no requirement, and for all organisations employing 51 people and above, a contribution of £1400 (roughly 10% of the annual stipend) must be made to the academic partner. For further information see: http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/training/industrial-case.aspx costs has been modified. For further information see:
http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/training/industrial-case.aspx

For Doctoral Training Partnerships there is no mandatory requirement to create CASE studentships from the DTP Training Grant, though this is permitted and encouraged. The conversion of a DTP studentship to CASE studentship removes the mandatory PIPS requirement for DTP students.

To be counted as a CASE award, the studentship should meet the terms and conditions for such awards as given in the BBSRC's studentship guide, *BBSRC Postgraduate Studentships*. Please note, **it is a mandatory requirement that the student completes a placement of three months minimum** (and no longer than 18 months) in the partner organisation.

5.3 Can part-time students be supported?

Yes. Part-time arrangements may be particularly suitable for those returning from a career break or who have domestic responsibilities that preclude full-time training.

Research Organisations and students should be realistic, however, about such arrangements. It is expected that the period of study will reflect the percentage of time spent pursuing doctoral studies, and a minimum of half-time study may be appropriate (requiring an expected period of study of up to six – eight years). Supervisors will wish to ensure that the project will be able to keep up with the new research developments that are likely to occur over such an extended period of study.

5.4 Can we replace students who leave early?

Yes, if you have sufficient funds in the Training Grant, or if necessary you can guarantee any funding required beyond the period of the current Training Grant from another source (i.e. if the period of new studentship extends beyond the end of the Training Grant). Students who leave within the first year will not be counted against the Research Organisations four year submission rates, but no replacement funding will be provided. If a student leaves after 12 months, BBSRC will include that student in post-award surveys on thesis submissions.

BBSRC would expect the replacement student to be offered the same opportunities for research, training and development (i.e. SysMIC and PIPS, where appropriate) as the original student. It is therefore expected that a reasonable studentship duration, geared to the project and the needs of the replacement student, is given for completion of the PhD.

6 Financial Arrangements

6.1 What are the national minimum stipend rates?

The minimum stipend for Research Council students is published annually on the RCUK website: http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/researchcareers/postgrad/Pages/home.aspx

Students eligible for a stipend must be in receipt of at least the Research Council minimum for the academic year in question, including where appropriate the current London supplement.

6.2 Are increases to the stipend levels included in the grant?

Normally, yes.

6.3 Can funds not committed in the first year be carried forward to a later year?

Yes. They can be used at any time during the grant. Any unspent funds remaining at the end of the Training Grant will not be paid when the Final Expenditure Statement is reconciled. They cannot be transferred.

7 Monitoring and Information

7.1 What information will the BBSRC be seeking on students funded from a Training Grant?

The cross-council Terms and Conditions of a Training Grant confirm the requirement for student and project information. It is very important for BBSRC to have information on the students (and their research) which are being supported with BBSRC funding. All Research Councils have moved to use Je-S based electronic systems for the return of student information. BBSRC requires the return of information on the students funded from a Training Grant through the Je-S Student Data Portal. An outline of the information that will be required includes:

- student and project details as provided on the standard nomination form
- duration of studentships awarded
- start date of awards
- stipends awarded
- details of CASE partners and levels of contributions
- breakdown of funds within the account into
- stipends
- fees
- research training support grants

In addition to the cross-council requirements the DTPs have specific requirement for monitoring and strategic engagement, outlined within the DTP offer of award.

7.2 When does BBSRC require student information from Research Organisations?

Details of the students funded from a Training Grant should be returned to BBSRC through the Je-S Data Portal within *one month* of the student starting. Annual surveys of PhD submission and completion rates (carried out in Autumn) will continue. BBSRC receives first-destination data on the employment of students once they have been awarded their degrees from the HESA survey of Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE).

BBSRC would ask that Research Organisations make students aware of the importance of completing the HESA questionnaire which they will receive in due course. This information is vital for BBSRC to be able to report on the impact of its funding.

7.3 What submission period is required for BBSRC PhD studentships?

The four year submission period applies to all PhD students – including those funded for 4 years. Students who submit after this period will count against the Research Organisations four year submission rate. Submission rates will continue to be a key indicator of quality of training environment in BBSRC's studentship competitions.

7.4 How will BBSRC monitor the use of Training Grant funding?

The Research Organisation is accountable to the BBSRC for the use of all funds in a Training Grant and should keep auditable records to ensure that this can be done. The Research Councils' Funding Assurance Programme (FAP) audit process will seek to ensure that Research Organisations have proper processes in place for management of their Training Grant funding.