Guidance on Doctoral Training Centres/Partnerships: approval, monitoring and review

1 Introduction

1.1 In recent years most of the UK’s research councils have moved to funding and training students through Doctoral Training Partnership/Centres for Doctoral Training (DTP/CDT) models. King’s was awarded an ESRC Doctoral Training Centre in 2010, a BBSRC Partnership led by UCL in 2012, and in the academic session 2013/14 the university was awarded the AHRC London Arts & Humanities Partnership (UCL led), the NERC London DTP (UCL led), and three EPSRC CDTs: Centre for Doctoral Training in Medical Imaging (King’s led), London School for Geometry & Number Theory (UCL led), and the Centre for Doctoral Training in Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to Non-Equilibrium Systems (CANES) (King’s led). The RCUK drive for doctoral training partnership models is to encourage more structured programmes, embed cohort learning, and focus funding in key research-led institutions. The RCUK DTP/DTC status can be viewed as a benchmark and increasingly additional funding opportunities and partnerships (academic, industrial and cultural) are being channelled through the DTP/CDT networks. RCUK have encouraged and engendered a consortia approach to DTP/CDT and it is with this new collaborative provision approach that these guidelines have been developed to ensure King’s has a robust and effective approval and monitoring programme across all our DTPs and CDTs.

1.2 This guidance is produced jointly by the Graduate School, Programme Approval and Development Committee and the College Education Committee as part of the Procedures for the approval and monitoring of collaborative provision to assist those developing proposals for Doctoral Training Partnerships and/or Centres for Doctoral Training.

1.3 The guidance draws on and is consistent with QAA Quality Code, chapter B10: Managing higher education provision with others and B11: Research Degrees and is designed to make clear the responsibilities of departments, Faculties (Institutes/School) and the College at the various stages of the process.

2 Definition and key characteristics

2.1 Centres for Doctoral Training (CDT) and Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTP) are defined by QAA as a partnership arrangement whereby two or more awarding bodies collaborate in the delivery of studentships, and personal, professional and career development skills training for research candidates. Included within this definition are Doctoral Training Programmes where there is a collaborative element to provision.

2.2 The key characteristics of DTPs/CDTs as outlined by QAA are as follows:

- One University is designated as the lead (home) university where the student is primarily registered;
- Each partner is responsible for the content, delivery, quality and standards of its own provision;
- May be used as a model of effective practice in providing research methods and skills training for research candidates and early career researchers;
- May involve a planned period of experience at the partner institution or supervisory arrangements;
- Normally, funded by Research Council studentships;
Governed by relevant sections of the Academic Regulations. The student is awarded a degree from their home institution.

3. Approval Process for new DTPs/CDTs and renewal

3.1 The approval and renewal of Doctoral Training Partnerships/Centres/Programmes are covered by a three stage process detailed below:

Stage 1 (outline agreement to explore partnership): New opportunities for DTPs/CDTs/Programmes must initially be discussed with Vice-Principal (Education), Director of Graduate School and Head of DTC Development, and for Health Faculties with Director of Research Development (Health). This group will advise on whether King’s will centrally support the application.

Stage 2 (formal agreement to make an application): If central institutional match funding is required/agreed, then outline approval to proceed with an application will be given by the Principal’s Executive Team (PET) in consultation with VP (Research & Innovation) and territorial VPs, and Finance based on outlined business and strategic case. Additionally, a Memorandum of Understanding will be agreed between partners.

Stage 3 (final approval and sign-off): For applications requiring central institutional funding PET will provide final sign-off to all applications.

3.2 All activities whereby outside bodies deliver parts of a King’s programme will be underpinned by a legally binding Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between the College and the partner setting out the roles, responsibilities and obligations of each partner for the duration of the activity. This includes a risk assessment for the partners involved.

4. Monitoring, review and governance of DTPs/CDTs

4.1 Doctoral Training Partnerships and Centres for Doctoral Training are monitored and reviewed at King’s in the following ways and by the College’s Postgraduate Research Students Subcommittee, the King’s Doctoral Training Partnership Group, and relevant Faculty research and education committees. All DTPs/CDTs are subject to:

- **Annual reports (including a financial report where applicable):** to be submitted to the Postgraduate Research Students Subcommittee (PRSS) and the King’s Doctoral Training Centre Partnership Group (KDTPG) for review. PRSS receives and considers the Annual Reports that each DTP/CDT has prepared for their Research Council/Funding Body (see Appendix 1), and if appropriate the King’s Academic Lead will be invited to attend to present their Annual Report and take questions.

- **Periodic Site visits:** periodic site visits are normally undertaken by the relevant Research Council/Funding Body in accordance with their policies and award requirements. In addition, the Postgraduate Research Students Subcommittee and/or King’s Doctoral Training Partnership Group may undertake internal reviews of Partnerships and Centres as necessary. This might include preparation for renewal, or resolution of issues identified by the DTP/CDT itself or the funding body.

- **Reports to sponsors:** will be submitted to the research council/funding body in accordance with their policies and award requirements; reports will be sent to
the Postgraduate Research Students Subcommittee and the King’s Doctoral Training Centre Partnership Group for information and the review.

4.2 In addition to central university oversight via the Postgraduate Research Students Subcommittee and the King’s Doctoral Training Partnership Group, each DTP/CDT has its own embedded governance structures (see Appendix 2), this normally includes a Management/Operations Board (or similar group) that help the Director/academic leads ensure the efficient and effective running of the DTP/CDT and the allocation of its resources. This Board will normally be made up of the key stakeholders who have delivery responsibility for the DTP/CDT. Some DTPs, including the London Arts & Humanities Partnership DTP and London NERC DTP, have cross-institutional representation Governing Councils on which the King’s Vice-Principal (Education) sits; the King’s Interdisciplinary Social Science Doctoral Training Centre has a Strategy Board which the Vice-Principal (Education) chairs.

4.3 The King’s Doctoral Training Partnership Group has key two roles: 1. sharing of best practice between DTPs/CDTs and, 2. the resolution of College-level issues and challenges facing DTCs. All DTP/CDT Directors/Academic Leads sit on this Group. The Group is chaired by Vice-Principal (Education).

4.4 An annual overview of the College’s register of activity pertaining to Doctoral Training Centres/Partnerships will be undertaken with a regular report on new and successful completion of activity being made to the Programme Development and Approval Committee and Academic Board.
Appendix 1

Research Council UK – audit and review procedures for Doctoral Training Partnerships and Centres for Doctoral Training

Arts & Humanities Research Council – Doctoral Training Partnerships and Centres for Doctoral Training (Block Grant Partnership 2)

AHRC London Arts & Humanities Partnership (LAHP)

LAHP is a partnership between King’s College London, School of Advanced Study (University of London), and University College London. UCL is the lead Research Organisation (RO).

First intake: October 2014.

Funding period: October 2014 to September 2018. 5 cohorts.

Audit and monitoring procedures

The AHRC will visit each award holder in years 1, 3 and 5 to discuss the achievements of the DTP or CDT and progress against commitments made in the proposal, as well as any challenges that the DTP or CDT is encountering and their plans for future developments. Each visit will have a set format and agenda, which will be circulated in advance.

In addition, the AHRC will meet with a group of students, funded from the partnership or centre, for a closed-door session around their experience.

As part of the monitoring process the DTP or CDT grant-holder must submit an annual report each January to the AHRC. This annual report will supplement the information on individual students and their projects that should be reported through the Je-S Student Data Portal.

Above in accordance with and in addition to standard RCUK procedures set out below:

Whilst it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to manage the centre training grant, the Research Council(s) reserve the right to call for periodic information on progress or to visit the Centre and/or management team.

In line with RCUK Monitoring and Information Requirements, in addition to providing information on Research Council funded students via the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP), Research Organisations will also be required to make returns to AHRC giving details of the students leveraged from additional sources.

The Research Organisation will be required to provide the Research Council with standard information on students and their training programmes through the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP) for inclusion in the Research Council’s management information system.

Research Organisations are also required to return information via the Je-S submission rate survey on the date of submission of the student’s thesis.

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council – Doctoral Training Partnerships

BBSRC London Interdisciplinary PhD Consortium

London BBSRC DTP is a partnership between Birkbeck, King’s College London, Royal Veterinary College, School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and University College London (DTP will include Queen Mary (University of London) from September 2015). UCL is the lead Research Organisation (RO).

Original intake: October 2012.

Original funding period: October 2012 to September 2014. 3 cohorts.

First intake of new DTP: October 2015.

DTP2 funding period: October 2015 to September 2019. 5 cohorts.
Institutions will be asked to report annually on their provision of training and this will be reviewed by BBSRC and its nominees in connection with the Portfolio Agreement and the institutions.

Other monitoring and engagement activities include:

- Annual report to BBSRC,
- Hosting an annual Partnership visit by BBSRC staff and its nominees,
- Attending a mid-term review meeting to assess the performance of the DTP and to inform BBSRC's decision to release the final two years of funding,
- Provision of accurate and timely information on student projects to BBSRC via the Je-S Student Details Portal,
- Good practice sharing events.

Above in accordance with and in addition to standard RCUK procedures set out below: Whilst it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to manage the centre training grant, the Research Council(s) reserve the right to call for periodic information on progress or to visit the Centre and/or management team.

In line with RCUK Monitoring and Information Requirements, in addition to providing information on Research Council funded students via the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP), Research Organisations will also be required to make returns to EPSRC giving details of the students leveraged from additional sources.

The Research Organisation will be required to provide the Research Council with standard information on students and their training programmes through the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP) for inclusion in the Research Council's management information system.

Research Organisations are also required to return information via the Je-S submission rate survey on the date of submission of the student's thesis.

**Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council – Centres for Doctoral Training**

**EPSRC Centre for Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to Non-Equilibrium Systems (CANES)**

CANES is a single institution CDT based at King's
First intake: October 2014
Funding period: April 2014 to September 2018. 5 cohorts.

**EPSRC Centre in Medical Imaging**

Medical Imaging is a partnership between Imperial College and King's College London.
King's is the lead RO.
First intake: October 2014
Funding period: April 2014 to September 2018. 5 cohorts.

**EPSRC London School of Geometry & Number Theory (LSGNT)**

LSGNT is a partnership between Imperial College, King's College London, and University College London. UCL is the lead RO.
First intake: October 2014
Funding period: April 2014 to September 2018. 5 cohorts.

**Audit and monitoring procedures**

Centres will be required to undergo a mid-term review following the start of their third studentship round, which will determine whether they receive funding for their last two recruitment rounds.
ESPRC will undertake reviews throughout the duration of the Centre, for which any necessary additional information must be provided in a timely manner.

Above in accordance with and in addition to standard RCUK procedures set out below:
Whilst it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to manage the centre training grant, the Research Council(s) reserve the right to call for periodic information on progress or to visit the Centre and/or management team.

In line with RCUK Monitoring and Information Requirements, in addition to providing information on Research Council funded students via the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP), Research Organisations will also be required to make returns to EPSRC giving details of the students leveraged from additional sources.

The Research Organisation will be required to provide the Research Council with standard information on students and their training programmes through the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP) for inclusion in the Research Council's management information system.

Research Organisations are also required to return information via the Je-S submission rate survey on the date of submission of the student's thesis.

NB. Further monitoring procedures still to be confirmed by EPSRC (August 2014).

Economic & Social Research Council – Doctoral Training Centres
King’s Interdisciplinary Social Science Doctoral Training Centre (KISS DTC)
KISS DTC is a single institution DTC based at King’s.
First intake: October 2011
Funding period: October 2011 to September 2015 (extended to September 2016). 6 cohorts.

Audit and monitoring procedures
All DTCs are required to submit an Annual Report which covers a number of areas such as the development of the DTC, collaboration, co-funding, and delivery against priority areas. The DTC is also required to provide further information on the students funded. This is intended to be a light-touch report that does not ask for detailed information on the operation of the DTC.

The ESRC Training and Skills Committee also visit each DTC over the course of the accreditation period in order to assess its progress against the ESRC’s objectives.

Above in accordance with and in addition to standard RCUK procedures set out below:
Whilst it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to manage the centre training grant, the Research Council(s) reserve the right to call for periodic information on progress or to visit the Centre and/or management team.

In line with RCUK Monitoring and Information Requirements, in addition to providing information on Research Council funded students via the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP), Research Organisations will also be required to make returns to EPSRC giving details of the students leveraged from additional sources.

The Research Organisation will be required to provide the Research Council with standard information on students and their training programmes through the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP) for inclusion in the Research Council's management information system.
Research Organisations are also required to return information via the Je-S submission rate survey on the date of submission of the student's thesis.

**Natural & Environmental Research Council – Doctoral Training Partnerships and Centres for Doctoral Training**

**London NERC Doctoral Training Partnership**

The London NERC DTP is a partnership between Birkbeck, Brunel University, Institute of Zoology, Royal Botanical Gardens Kew, King’s College London, Natural History Museum, Queen Mary (University of London), Royal Holloway (University of London), University College London. UCL is the lead RO.

First intake: October 2014
Funding period: October 2014 to September 2018. 5 cohorts.

**Audit and monitoring procedures**

NERC will undertake institutional visits and requires mandatory annual reporting for each DTP as well as the standard studentships information captured through J-eS Studentship Details Portal (SDP).

There will be an evaluation of DTPs in year three.

*Above in accordance with and in addition to standard RCUK procedures set out below:*

Whilst it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to manage the centre training grant, the Research Council(s) reserve the right to call for periodic information on progress or to visit the Centre and/or management team.

In line with RCUK Monitoring and Information Requirements, in addition to providing information on Research Council funded students via the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP), Research Organisations will also be required to make returns to EPSRC giving details of the students leveraged from additional sources.

The Research Organisation will be required to provide the Research Council with standard information on students and their training programmes through the Je-S Student Details Portal (SDP) for inclusion in the Research Council's management information system.

Research Organisations are also required to return information via the Je-S submission rate survey on the date of submission of the student's thesis.
Appendix 2

King's College London Centres for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Training Partnerships governance structures

AHRC London Arts & Humanities Partnership (LAHP DTP)

**LAHP Governing Council**
Chair: external.
Meetings: 3 times per year.
Role: All partners have senior level representation on the Governing Council. The Governing Council has strategic oversight of the LAHP DTP.

**LAHP Management Board**
Chair: Director of LAHP
Meetings: Monthly.
Role: The LAHP Management Group oversees the day to day operation of the DTP. All partners have representation on the DTP. The LAHP Management Board reports to LAHP Governing Council.

**LAHP Studentship Selection Committee**
Chair: Dean of Arts & Humanities (UCL).
Meetings: 1 per year.
Role: The LAHP Studentship Selection Committee approves recommendations for awards and provides oversight to the annual studentship competition. All partners are represented on the Committee. The Committee reports to the LAHP Management Board.

BBSRC London Interdisciplinary PhD Consortium

**DTP Management Board**
Chair: Director of DTP
Meetings: 3 times per year.
Role: All partners represented on Management Board. The Management Board oversees the strategic direction of the DTP and provides management and monitoring oversight.

**Research & Student Management Committee**
Chair: member of Management Board.
Meetings: 3 times per year.
Role: Oversees student selection and matching of projects; also oversees training delivery.

**Partnership & CASE Committee**
Chair: member of Management Board.
Meetings: 3 times per year.
Role: Oversee PIPS and industrial partnerships.

EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to Non-Equilibrium Systems (CANES)

**CANES Steering Committee**
Chair: Director of CDT Prof. Peter Sollich
Meetings: 3 Meetings annually
Notes: Oversees budget, organisation and approval of training programme, interface with external partners, coordination and monitoring of impact activities and new initiatives

**CANES Recruitment and Monitoring Board**
Chair: Assistance Director Dr Chris Lorenz
Meetings: Meet up to 6 times per year
Notes: Responsible for selection of projects, student recruitment and matching students to supervisors.

**CANES Advisory Board**
Chair: Michael Luck in 2015, Chris Mottershead in 2016 and thereafter
Meetings: Annually at CANES Annual Retreat
Notes: The CANES Advisory Board is an independent board that will guide the CDT’s teaching and research strategy. The Board includes representation from CANES’ industrial partners, a number of leading national and international experts in the area of non-equilibrium systems.

**EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in Medical Imaging**
*Advisory Group*
Chair: external
Meetings: 1 per year
Role: Cross partnership membership including external industrial representation. Acts as advisory strategic oversight body for CDT.

**CDT Management Group**
Chair: Director of CDT
Meetings: Fortnightly.
Role: Representation from across the partners. Oversees day-to-day operation of the CDT.

**EPSRC London School of Geometry & Number Theory Centre for Doctoral Training**
*CDT Strategic Advisory Board*
Chair: External.
Meetings: 1 per year.
Role: Membership includes academic and industrial partners. The CDT Strategic Advisory Board oversees the operation, progress and direction of the CDT and offers guidance to the CDT Management Committee and Partners on any high-level issues requiring attention.

**CDT Management Committee**
Chair: Director of CDT.
Meetings: Quarterly.
Role: The Management Committee provides oversight of the day-to-day running of the CDT and has representation from all partners.

**CDT Staff-Student Liaison Committee**
Chair: Elected student representative.
Meetings: Quarterly.
Role: The Student-Staff Liaison Committee will have overall responsibility for providing feedback on the effectiveness of training and student needs from the CDT.

**ESRC King’s Interdisciplinary Social Science Doctoral Training Centre**
*KISS Strategic Advisory Board*
Chair: VP (Education)
Meetings: 3 times per year.
Role: The KISS Strategy Board provides strategic oversight to the DTC and includes membership from across the College.

**Operations Executive**
Chair: Director of KISS DTC
Meetings: Monthly
Role: Oversees day-to-day operation of the DTC. Membership includes Theme Leaders and key staff involved in DTC.
**Studentship Management Group**  
Chair: Director KISS DTC  
Meetings: Up to 2 per year.  
Role: The Studentship Management Group oversees allocation of studentships and provides advice on matters pertaining to KISS studentships.

**London NERC Doctoral Training Partnership**  
**London NERC DTP Governing Council**  
Chair: VP (Research), UCL  
Meetings: 3 times per year.  
Role: All partners have senior level representation on the Governing Council. The Governing Council has strategic oversight of the London NERC DTP.

**London NERC DTP Management Board**  
Chair: Director of London NERC DTP  
Meetings: Monthly.  
Role: All partners represented on the Management Board. The Management Board provides day-to-day operational oversight of DTP.