



# Placement Scheme Guidelines

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## // Policy

### AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1. NINE DTP is committed to providing our award-holders with the widest range of opportunities to:
  - a) Apply their knowledge, skills and research in non-academic, real-world environments;
  - b) Gain new skills and competencies that complement their postgraduate research and training; &
  - c) Generate societal and economic impact from their research and share the knowledge they have developed with non-academic actors and audiences.
2. To help achieve these objectives, NINE DTP runs a placement scheme, complementing the UKRI Internship scheme (<https://www.ukri.org/skills/policy-internships-scheme/>). Our placement scheme is responsive and supports our award-holders to design their own placements, which are tailored to their specific research, training and career development needs.
3. The following principles underpin our placement scheme:
  - a) **It is student-led** // Our award-holders are empowered to develop their own placements, working in partnership with their supervisory team.
  - b) **Calls for applications are held biannually** // NINE DTP will accept applications for review twice per year, with deadlines on **1 October** and **1 April**.

### UKRI AND EXTERNAL INTERNSHIPS SCHEMES

NINE DTP will continue to support external Internship schemes on a responsive basis wherever those schemes have specific deadlines.

Award-holders seeking to apply to such as scheme should notify the DTP Manager as soon as possible.

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT

4. NINE DTP's placement scheme provides award-holders with the following financial support:
  - a) Up to 3 months additional funding whilst out on placement, paid at the standard studentship rate; &
  - b) Additional funding of up to £800 per month to meet the costs of specific expenses arising from placements, including additional travel and accommodation costs, following the guidelines used by the ESRC for its internship scheme (Annex 1).

### TERMS & CONDITIONS

5. Whilst award-holders are on placements they will remain registered at their host institution and continue to interact and engage with their supervisory team.

6. Award-holders will not be employed or have any form of contract of employment with their host organisation.
7. Award-holders may be required to sign a non-disclosure and/or confidentiality agreement to comply with their host organisation's data protection requirements.
8. A placement agreement between the award-holder's host institution and their host organisation will be entered into for all approved placements. All award holders should note that the preparation of this placement agreement can prove a lengthy process, with support and input necessary from University legal teams. Applicants to the scheme should ensure that they provide *at least* one month to create and sign-off any legal agreement, although we would recommend providing a **3 month** lead-in time to allow for work-load limitations.

## ELIGIBILITY

9. To be eligible to apply for a NINE DTP placement award-holders must:
  - a) Be fully registered on their programme of doctoral study (be in the +3/+3.5 period of their studentship);
  - b) Have completed successfully their year one (1) progression review; &
  - c) Be assessed by their Department/School to be on-time to submit their thesis no later than six (6) months following the end of their current period of registered, supervised study.
10. Award-holders on continuation or who have suspended their studies are not eligible to be considered for funding via the placement scheme.
11. Award-holders who hold collaborative studentships, which already involve collaboration with a non-academic organisation(s), remain eligible to apply for funding via this scheme.
12. Award-holders can only receive funding for one (1) placement via this scheme during their period of study, although they can make multiple applications to the scheme.
13. In order to widen opportunities with the limited resource available, NINE DTP would not expect an award-holder to receive funding for both a placement and an OIV; candidates should consider this when preparing any bids and prioritise accordingly.
14. Any non-academic organisation in the UK or beyond, in either the public, private or third sectors, can host a placement. Universities and other organisations designated as a Higher Education Institution are not eligible to act as a host organisation.

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

15. All applications for funding via the placement scheme will be reviewed by a cross-institutional panel, including one member on NINE DTP with budget oversight. The panel may seek advice and feedback on an application from other academic or administrative members of staff at our partner universities. The reviewers will decide whether the application should be supported, assessing applications against the following criteria:
  - a) **Contribution towards the award-holder's research and/or training** – How closely does the proposed placement support and complement the award-holder's doctoral research and/or training needs.
  - b) **Support and facilities provided by the host organisation** – What support, facilities and resources will the award-holders benefit from whilst on placement, including matched-funding from the host-organisation.
  - c) **Impact and knowledge exchange to be realised** – What impact is the placement anticipated to generate for the host organisation and/or more widely, and how will the award-holder support and effect exchange of knowledge between themselves and the host organisation.
  - d) **Ethical and practical considerations** – Are there any ethical or practical issues affecting the proposed placement?

## RESOURCING

16. Funding for the NINE DTP placement scheme is limited, and applications will necessarily be reviewed with a consideration of our budgetary limitations. Applications will be considered biannually, with limited funds available.
17. Host organisations are also strongly encouraged to provide matched funding to support proposed placements, for example meeting half of the total cost of the placement, or providing funding to meet the costs of additional expenses, such as accommodation. By securing matching fund, the resources available to support this scheme will be used more effectively and allow more award-holders to benefit.

## // Process

### DEVELOPING PLACEMENT PROPOSALS

18. Award-holders and their supervisory teams are encouraged to actively explore possible placements with potential host organisations. During these initial discussions NINE DTP can provide award-holders and their supervisory teams with advice where appropriate. In addition to this approach, the NINE DTP may also run calls inviting non-academic organisations to put forward placements proposals, which if approved, will be subsequently advertised to our award-holders.

### APPLYING FOR FUNDING

An open call for applications from eligible award-holders is held biannually.

Deadlines for applications: 4pm on **1 October** and **1 April**.

Candidates should allow up to three months between the call deadline and the start of their placement. Applications should be submitted using the NINE DTP Placement Application form (available via the NINE DTP website) in advance of the deadline.

19. Once a placement proposal has become more developed and there is initial agreement between the award-holder, their supervisory team and the host organisation, the award-holder needs to complete and submit a NINE DTP Placement Scheme Application Form, within which the details and expected outcomes of their proposed placement will be described. Letters of support for the placement from the host organisation and the award-holder's principal supervisor need to accompany and be attached to all applications. Placement applications must be supported and approved by the Director of Postgraduate Studies of the award-holder's host Department/School, who also needs to provide a letter of support, which should be attached to the award-holder's application.
20. Applications should be submitted to the DTP in advance of the call deadline (4 pm of 1 October or 1 April annually). NINE DTP will check and confirm the award-holder's eligibility to be considered for a placement and then consider the application against the scheme's key criteria, which are outlined in Paragraph 15. Applications will be reviewed jointly by NINE DTP Directors, who may seek advice and feedback on an application from other academic or administrative members of staff at our partner universities.
21. The reviewing process will take *at least* three weeks, but may take longer if the DTP receives a significant number of applications.

## ESTABLISHING APPROVED PLACEMENTS

22. The NINE DTP Manager will notify the award-holder of the reviewers' decision. This notification will detail the terms of the support and funding that has been agreed. This correspondence will be copied to the award-holder's principal supervisor, the Director of Postgraduate Studies and the postgraduate administrator of the award-holder's host department/school. It will further be copied to parties who manage the payments of the award-holders monies.
23. Following notification of a successful application, the host University will follow local policy and procedure to gain Health & Safety authorisation, and to extend the period of supervised study for the period approved by NINE DTP to conduct the placement. The concession request must be copied to NINE DTP, accompanied by the Health & Safety authorisation documentation. Should Health & Safety authorisation not be granted, the placement application will be cancelled.
24. On the raising of award-holder's concession to extend their period of supervised study, NINE DTP and the relevant internal department with responsibility for the payment of maintenance grants and tuition fees will arrange and confirm the disbursement of any additional expenses approved and for any further necessary changes to the award-holder's studentship. Supplementary expenses will usually only be reimbursed following submission of receipts, leases, tenancy agreements or invoices from the award-holder, unless agreed otherwise.
25. A Placement Agreement between the award-holder's host institution and host organisation will be prepared and entered into prior to the commencement of an approved placement and following Health & Safety authorisation. This legal agreement will detail the roles and responsibilities of each party to the placement, confirm any match-funding and how this will be accounted for and disbursed, and cover issues such as insurance coverage whilst the student is at the host organisation and intellectual property (IP).

## MONITORING & REPORTING

26. The award-holder will be required to write brief (maximum two sides of A4) report on their activities and the learning outcomes of their visit within one month of the end of the placement. The content should be suitable for presentation on the NINE DTP website, including appropriate images or visual media.

If an award-holder does not wish their report to be made public, they may choose to provide a written report for the attention of the DTP Directors only. Failure to report on the outcomes of a placement in either of the above formats will result in the withholding of reimbursement unless suitable justification is provided.

## PLACEMENT TERMINATIONS

27. Should an award-holder be required to terminate their placement earlier than planned for any reason then they must notify the NINE DTP Administrator of their host institution immediately, detailing the reason for the termination. Following notification of termination NINE DTP will liaise with the award-holder to complete the termination and ensure successful resumption of their doctoral studies. In these circumstances the DTP will seek to return any unused funds that may have been disbursed to the award-holder.

### Further Information

<b>Contact</b>	Stuart Gladwell
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:contact.nine@durham.ac.uk">contact.nine@durham.ac.uk</a>
<b>Call</b>	0191 33 41926

## Annex 1: ESRC FAQs

For any further queries, please contact your local administrative contact in the first instance.

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### Do I have to be within a certain distance of my internship to be able to secure a tenancy and claim relocation rental expenses?

Yes, you should be within 50 miles of your internship host organisation in order to claim for accommodation. In order to claim for relocation accommodation expenses you would be expected to be more than 50 miles from your university (home) accommodation.

### What is the maximum amount I can claim for relocation accommodation costs?

When undertaking an internship, a student can claim up to a maximum of £2,400 based on a three month internship award to cover **reasonable** travel and accommodation for the period of their internship. Students are expected to use the **most economical method** of travel and ensure that **rental amounts are not excessive** for one person.

Accommodation will only be covered if it is a **reasonable** amount. We would not expect your accommodation costs to be over £700 a month, and we will not subsidise expensive rent. If your rental agreement is above this threshold you will need to seek approval from NINE DTP before signing the agreement. If we deem these costs unreasonable we reserve the right not to pay out the full amount applied for, as we feel that £2,100 for accommodation over three months is more than enough to live comfortably.

In addition, the size of accommodation rented should be reasonable for one person. Ideally, students should be looking to rent one room in a shared house, a studio or a one bedroom flat.

### Can I claim for relocation accommodation if the tenancy starts before my internship?

You can claim for up to one week before the start of your internship, to allow for moving in.

### Will you reimburse the deposit or admin fee charged by my landlord?

The DTP will reimburse administration fees, as long as they are detailed on the tenancy agreement, and as long as the total for the administration fees and rent does not exceed the allowance provided for the internship awarded.

The DTP will **not** reimburse your deposit. The responsibility for the deposit lies with the student.

### Can I claim relocation rental expenses for living with relatives whilst at my internship?

No, you cannot claim rental expenses for living with relatives.

### Can I claim relocation rental expenses if I am subletting and I do not have a tenancy agreement?

You can claim rental expenses if you are subletting. However, the DTP does discourage this, and advises you to seek a commercial rental agreement wherever possible. If you have to sublet, you will still need to provide signed confirmation (by you and the person you are subletting from) of the cost of the rent and the length of the sublet.

If you sublet, you will need to include the cost of utilities bills (gas, water, electric) in the sublet agreement if you wish them to be covered by the DTP. The DTP will only pay utilities bills (gas, water, electric) if they are in the name of the student holding the internship. The total cost of the sublet (including bills) must not exceed the allowance provided for the internship awarded.

**How do you establish whether relocation rental amounts are not reasonable?**

We have established that up to £700 a month in rent is reasonable.

**Will you reimburse my utilities bills if they are included in my rent?**

Yes, the DTP will reimburse utilities bills where included in your rent, and we recommend that where possible you do get a tenancy agreement which includes bills.

**Will you reimburse my utilities bills if they are not included in my rent?**

We will reimburse utilities bills for gas, electricity and water only, again, as long as your accommodation costs do not exceed the allowance provided for the internship awarded.

The DTP will only pay utilities bills (gas, water, electric) if they are in the name of the student holding the internship.

The DTP will not reimburse you for phone, internet or TV license if these are separate from your rental agreement.

**Can I claim for furniture hire if my accommodation is unfurnished?**

No, the DTP advises students to get furnished accommodation, and will not pay for furniture hire.

**Can I claim for local travel (e.g. underground travel) as well as accommodation expenses?**

Students can claim up to a maximum of £2,400 based on a three month internship award to cover reasonable travel to and from work and accommodation for the period of their internship.

Students are expected to use the **most economical method** of travel and ensure that **rental amounts are not excessive** for one person.

**Can I claim for travel home during the internship period?**

You can claim for one journey to the internship region prior to the internship commencing, and one journey back to your home at the end of the internship. This must fall within the total allowance provided by the internship awarded.

**Can I claim for car parking expenses?**

No, you cannot claim for car parking expenses.

**Can I claim for lunch expenses?**

No, you cannot claim for lunch expenses.

**Will you reimburse me for budget air fares?**

The DTP will only reimburse airfare where it takes place as part of either the initial move to the region of the internship, or the move home from the internship. This will only be covered if you can provide evidence that the airfare (including all taxes and additional costs) will be less expensive than an off-peak, standard train ticket.

**Will you reimburse my postage costs?**

No, we will not reimburse postage costs.