



Supporting, delivering and facilitating high quality opportunities and training by engaging with students, staff and partners to positively impact the social science community in Scotland

Supervisor-led Studentships Q&A

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) Competition

From SGSSS: Professor Alan Marshall (Deputy Director)

From Skills Development Scotland: Dr Emma Hollywood and Dr Emma Parry



Scottish Graduate School
of Social Science
Sgoil Cheumnaichean Saidheans
Sòisealta na h-Alba



Economic
and Social
Research Council



Scottish Funding Council
Promoting further and higher education

What will we cover?

- A brief introduction to DTP2 and its implications for supervisors
- A brief introduction to our SDS Competition Timeline.
- Overview of the SDS Topics (presented by Emma Hollywood and Emma Parry)
- Time for Q&A





Supervisor-led Studentships

Key changes as we move into DTP2

- **Major change in ESRC Completion Policy for students commencing from October 2024:** completion within the funded period.
 - **Risk assessment** and **feasibility** key in devising, assessing and implementing research proposals
- **The length of the standard PhD** has increased to 3.5 years in recognition of ESRC expectations that students will undertake a 3ms placement (more later) and 3 months for additional new training required by the ESRC. (A reminder that all studentships must be offered as **full-time or part-time** opportunities).
- **Eligibility for first supervision** - First supervisors need to be research-active social scientists who are aligned to a UoA for which their institution has eligibility. SGSSS (and ESRC) will audit supervisor eligibility carefully. For more on eligibility criteria, visit [this page](#).



Supervisor-led Studentships

Key changes as we move into DTP2

- **Move to challenge-led pathways:** each applicant must select a challenge-led pathway within which their student will sit.

Communication, AI, and New Technologies	Environment, Migration, and Demographic Change
Governance and Institutions	Health, Wellbeing and Communities
Securities: Justice, Economies, and Conflict	Social Inequalities



Supervisor-led Studentships

Introducing “Research in Practice”

Through Research in Practice, SGSSS seeks to equip ESRC funded students to be confident collaborating across sectors and disciplinary boundaries.

- The placement must be separate to the PhD student’s research and be designed to support their researcher development, sector knowledge and transferable skills.
- Students must undertake the placement in the second or third year of their PhD study, with more than 3 months remaining before their funding end date.
- Placements can take place within academia or outside academia.
- Academic placements must not be undertaken with the student’s current supervisor and/or research team and must take place outside of the student’s home department.
- Students will discuss placement plans with their supervisor team and SGSSS at the Development Needs Analysis.
- SGSSS must approve all placement proposals in advance to confirm that they meet the placement requirements.

For more on placements, click [here](#).



Supervisor-led Studentships

Key notes for new supervisors

- In 2021 we introduced a new element to our marking Framework – the Whole Person Approach – all successful applicants to our supervisor led competitions will be expected to use this in recruiting students – you will receive guidance on this following our panel decisions.
- In 2020 the ESRC changed its recruitment policy on international students – we are now able to recruit international students up to a maximum of 30% of our total allocation. This is complex to implement across competitions and so successful supervisors will receive guidance on recruitment.



Supervisor-led Studentships

There are three separate competitions

Steers Competition

3 awards in each of the following steers

- Advanced Quantitative Methods
- Dataset
- Interdisciplinary

'Open' Collaborative Competition

~14 awards

Skills Development Scotland Collaborative Competition

4 awards

Dates for your diary



- **23rd October:** Deadline for Collaborative Competition and SDS Collaborative Competition Applications

Please note institutions may set their own internal deadlines

For more on the Steers and Open Collaborative Competitions, we will offer a webinar today from 2-3 p.m.



Key tips for securing funding

- Our review will include evaluations by academics outside the discipline area of the student/supervisor
- So, there is a need to communicate clearly the logic, value and broader impact of the research to colleagues in other disciplines
- The ESRC requires PhD research to be completed in 3 years (no writing-up year)
- Our evaluation of applications will consider the feasibility of PhD projects carefully
- Encourage applicants to describe contingency planning if there are delays
- Use the resources on our website!
- Successful applications, scoring criteria, videos and more
- If you experience any issues or have questions get in touch.



Skills
Development
Scotland

Skills Development Scotland

Dr Emma Hollywood

Dr Emma Parry

SDS Collaborative PhD Programme



How it works

- SDS identifies topics that will contribute to our strategic objectives
- SDS works closely with the university, academic supervisors and the student to support successful completion of the PhD.
- Up to four proposals are awarded each year, co-funded by SDS and SGSSS
- **The PhD should have a strong focus on policy and practice outcomes and impact**

Benefits of the SDS Programme

- Engages the academic community in Scotland to support policy-relevant skills research.
- Produces new research aligned to the evolving skills agenda in Scotland.
- Develops a new group of researchers with an in-depth understanding of the unique Scottish skills landscape.

Find out more in our 2023/24 PhD Brochure

Working with SDS



Role of student

- Students work closely with SDS
- Monthly meetings with SDS sponsor
- SDS sponsor, student and supervisor meet at least once a year
- Keep SDS up to date with any changes or issues.

SDS offer

- SDS sponsor
- Knowledge exchange programme of seminars, Networking Event, 3MT competition
- Placement opportunities
- Access to data and respondents

24/25 SDS Topics



Exploring transitions to early adulthood using data from Growing Up in Scotland



Quantifying inequality: using large scale data sets to increase understanding of the drivers of inequality



The role of generative artificial intelligence in careers guidance



Skills for the future: upskilling and reskilling as a response to technological disruption and workforce transformation

SDS Competition Timeline





Q&A

- If you have any additional queries, please email us on team@sgsss.ac.uk