



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

**GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS FOR
POSTGRADUATE AWARDS IN
THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES**

**THE DOCTORAL AWARDS
SCHEME**

DECEMBER 2007

MISSION STATEMENT

The Arts and Humanities Research Council aims to:

- Support and promote high-quality and innovative research in the arts and humanities.
- Support, through programmes in the arts and humanities, the development of skilled people for academic, professional and other employment.
- Promote awareness of the importance of arts and humanities research and its role in understanding ourselves, our society, our past and our future, and the world in which we live.
- Ensure that the knowledge and understanding generated by arts and humanities research is widely disseminated for the economic, social and cultural benefit of the UK and beyond.
- Contribute to the shaping of national policy in relation to the arts and humanities.

THE AIMS OF THE AHRC'S POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME

The AHRC's postgraduate programme aims to improve the support, training and development opportunities offered to postgraduates, helping them to:

- Make significant contributions to the advancement of knowledge and understanding
- Develop as highly-skilled researchers ready for careers in the HE and other sectors
- Develop the skills required by the knowledge-driven economy, and demonstrate the arts and humanities' contribution to the UK's cultural, social and economic well-being.

MAIN CHANGES TO THE 2008 COMPETITION

In the 2008 competition the main changes which applicants and institutions should note are as follows:

DR and PR Forms

DR and PR forms will now be submitted to the AHRC **by the institution at which the applicant plans to study**. If the applicant has already graduated, then the DR and PR forms should be completed by the institution at which the applicant completed their degree and then forwarded to the institution at which the applicant plans to study. The forms are then attached to the application form and sent to the AHRC by **1 May 2008**. If the applicant is graduating in 2008, then the forms should be completed by the institution at which they completed their degree and then forwarded to the institution at which they plan to study. The institution will then send the form to the AHRC by e-mail to arrive by the relevant deadline.

Capping application numbers

All institutions submitting applications in the 2008 Open Competition have a cap on the number of applications they are permitted to submit to us. This is in preparation for the new schemes, which will be implemented over the next two years. The AHRC will have informed all institutions of the number of applications they may submit for the 2008 Competition.

Doctoral applicants applying for the third time

Applicants who have already applied to us in the Doctoral Awards Scheme are not permitted to apply to us a third time unless their proposal has changed significantly or they have changed their institution. If an applicant considers that they meet either of these criteria, they should make the case in their proposal for support.

Word limit for institutional statements

A word limit of 500 words has been set for institutional statements. Please ensure that these limits are adhered to in completion of the application form.

Part-time PhD - minimum duration

The minimum duration of a part-time PhD has been amended to twenty months from the previous 24 months. To be eligible to apply to us for support, you must have this duration of study remaining on your PhD.

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This Guide is intended for those who want to apply for awards to begin in October 2008 to support their doctoral study, and for those who will advise them. It sets out the rules of eligibility for awards, the types of awards provided, the procedures for application and assessment, and the financial value of awards.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section describes the questions you need to ask before applying to the AHRC for a postgraduate award. We have provided brief answers to these questions, but you need to refer to the relevant section of the Guide to find more detailed information. You may also wish to refer to the two flow charts at the end of this section, which show the application and assessment process.

What types of award does the AHRC provide?

(See section 2)

Awards are provided for students to undertake Master's-level study or doctoral study at a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the United Kingdom (UK). There are three schemes:

- The **Research Preparation Master's Scheme** provides support for students intending to proceed to doctoral study, who are undertaking a Master's course which will prepare them for doctoral study. The scheme will provide support for students in the creative and performing arts who are intending to proceed to doctoral study or to a career in research in the higher education sector, who are undertaking a Master's course that will prepare them for doctoral study or a research career. We expect these students to gain a Master's qualification at the end of their AHRC award. Students who are initially registered as a Master's student, but who are proceeding directly to doctoral study without gaining a Master's qualification, should apply in the Doctoral Awards Scheme.
- The **Professional Preparation Master's Scheme** provides support for students intending to proceed to a career in professional practice, who are undertaking a Master's or Postgraduate Diploma course that will prepare them specifically for that professional practice.
- The **Doctoral Awards Scheme** provides support for students undertaking doctoral study. Students should apply through this scheme even if their initial registration is as a probationary student or as an MPhil student.

There are separate guides for each of these schemes; this guide applies only to the **Doctoral Awards Scheme**.

Will the AHRC support me on my programme of study?

(See sections 3, 5 and 6)

We take into account both the qualification you are planning to undertake and the subject matter of your research programme. To apply to the Doctoral Awards Scheme you must be planning to undertake a PhD or DPhil. You may apply if you have already commenced your doctoral study, but the minimum period of support is one year full-time or twenty months part-time. The subject area of your study must fall within the AHRC's subject domain.

Am I eligible to apply?

(See Sections 5 and 6)

Eligibility depends on academic and residency criteria, and on whether your studies fit within the terms of the scheme and the AHRC's subject domain. To be eligible to apply for an award under the Doctoral Awards Scheme, you should normally have gained a first degree from a recognised HEI, and we normally expect you to have been awarded, or be studying for, a Master's degree or similar postgraduate qualification. To be eligible to apply for an AHRC award you must be ordinarily resident in the UK or European Union.

If I have applied for a doctoral award before can I apply again?

If you have applied for a doctoral award once before, and been unsuccessful, then you may re-apply. **You are not eligible to apply if you have applied for a doctoral award and been unsuccessful on two previous occasions**, i.e. you cannot apply to the Doctoral Awards Scheme for a third time. The only exception to this is if your research proposal or institution where you plan to undertake your PhD has changed substantially from any previous application you have made. You should make a case in your proposal to justify why you feel the changes allow you to submit a third doctoral application.

What does an AHRC award provide?

(See section 7)

If you are studying full-time, and you are eligible for a full award, you will receive a maintenance grant (£12,600 in 2007-08 for students studying in institutions outside London). If you are studying part-time, and you are eligible for a full award, you will receive a maintenance grant up to a maximum of 60% of a full-time award for the support of your studies. Please note that the amount of maintenance grant a part-time award holder will receive each year will depend in the length of their award. We also provide fees-only awards for eligible students from the European Union. All AHRC awards cover payment of approved tuition fees (up to a maximum of £3,240 in 2007-08 for full-time students and up to £1,620 for part-time students). If you hold an award for full-time, you may be eligible for additional support and allowances.

Awards usually start on or around 1 October.

How do I apply?

(See section 8 and Appendix C)

To apply for a doctoral award you must complete an AHRC 'doctoral awards scheme' application form. The form is in three parts: you complete Part I, you nominate two referees to complete Part II, and the institution at which you will be studying completes Part III. The institution submits the application on your behalf, but it is your responsibility to ensure the form reaches us by the closing date. You are therefore advised to allow the institution adequate time to complete their section as they may be handling large numbers of applications. Before you proceed with your application, you must read the relevant sections of this Guide to check that you are eligible to apply for an award. The Application Form and Guidance Notes can be downloaded from www.ahrc.ac.uk

If you have completed (or are completing) a Master's degree, the institution at which you took your degree needs to complete a Postgraduate Report (PR) form. If your degree was taken at an overseas institution, the UK institution at which you will be studying needs to complete the PR form.

If you have completed an undergraduate degree, the institution at which you took your degree needs to complete a Degree Results (DR) form. If your degree was taken at an overseas institution, the institution at which you will be studying in the UK needs to complete a DR(Overseas) form. If you do not have an undergraduate degree, or are currently studying for an undergraduate degree, you need to read Section 5 to check that you are eligible to apply. In all cases, your proposed institution must submit the DR or DR (OS) and/or PR forms to us.

What is the closing date?

All applications must be received at the AHRC Office by **5.00pm on 1 May 2008**. There is only one closing date for applications each year. The application process is a lengthy one so you should start the process as early as possible. You must contact your institution at the earliest opportunity as they may require your application to arrive with them well in advance of the 1 May deadline. This year we have introduced 'capping', which means that institutions will only be allowed to submit a certain number of applications. You should contact your institution for information on the process they will be using to select applications to go forward to the competition and how this will impact on your application.

There are separate deadlines for the DR, DR(Overseas) and PR forms for applicants graduating in 2008. You will need to check the guidance notes to ensure the forms are received by the AHRC by the appropriate date.

How will my application be assessed?

(See section 9)

Your application will be assessed by one of eight Postgraduate Panels. The panel members are senior academics from HEIs across the UK. Each application is judged on its own merits. The panel agrees a mark for each application that reflects their assessment of the entire application, including the information and evidence provided about your ability, aptitude, commitment and preparedness for postgraduate study, the quality of work you will produce, and the quality of training and support to be provided by the department and institution.

What are my chances of gaining an award?

The competition each year is fierce and the quality of applications is always very high. You will be in competition with all the other applicants seeking a doctoral award to begin their studies in October 2008. In 2007, we received 2,200 eligible doctoral applications and 730 offers of award were accepted: a success rate of 33%. The success rate has been similar to this in recent years.

How will I know if I have been successful?

(See section 10)

Between August and early September we write to everyone who has applied for an award informing them of the outcome of their application.

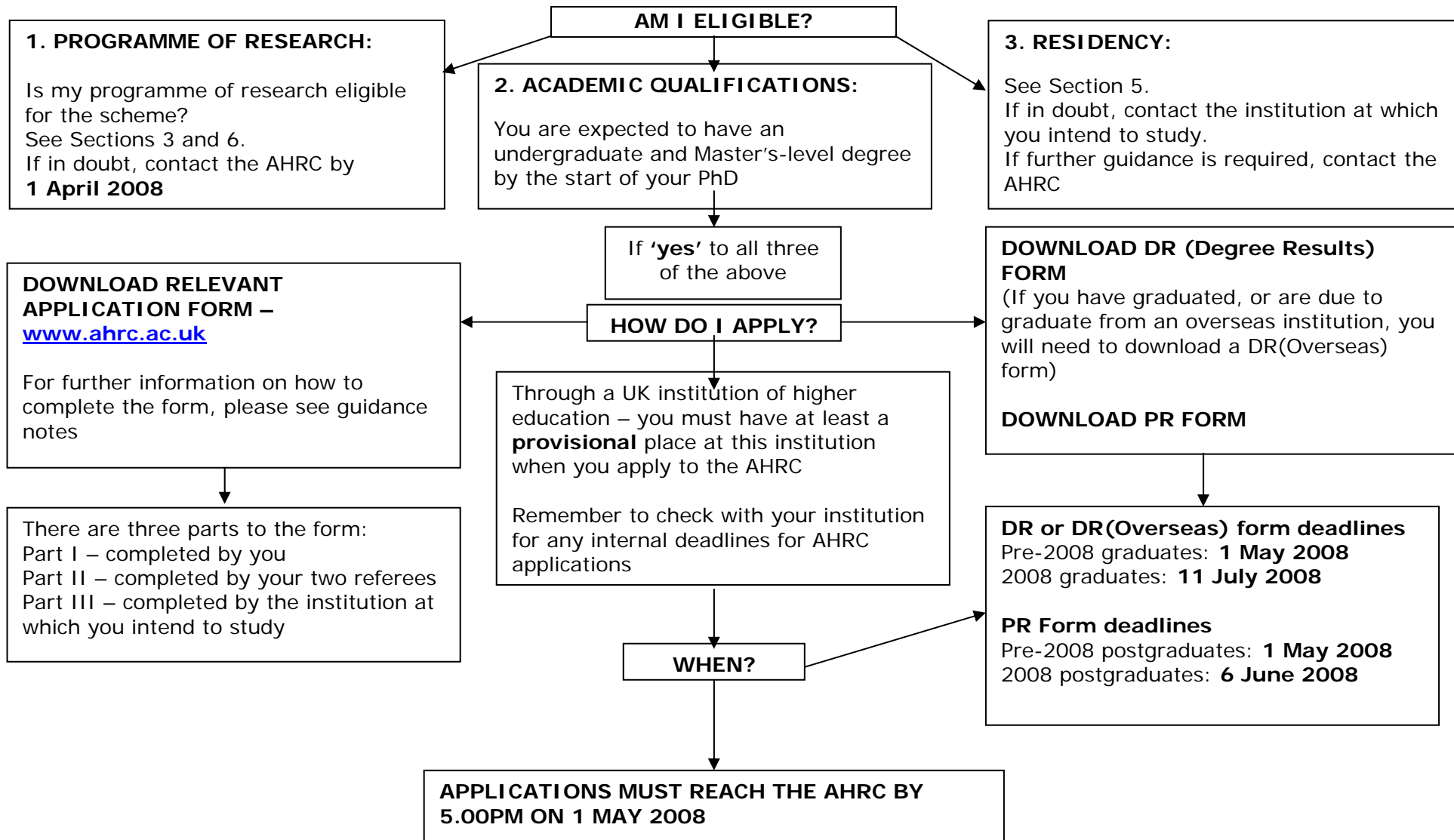
What do I do now?

Read this guide carefully and, if you think you are eligible to apply, download the relevant application form and guidance notes from our website. **You should also contact the institution at which you will be studying for advice on completing the form, and to ensure that you meet their timetable for applications.**

What if I have further questions?

If your question is not covered in this Guide, you should approach the institution at which you will be studying. If the institution cannot help, please contact us. See paragraph 48 or the AHRC website for contact details.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS



THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

DEADLINE FOR THE RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS: 5.00PM, 1 MAY 2008

May: checking, sorting and logging of applications

May – June: applications sent to panel members for assessment

Early July: panel meetings held, applications discussed and final grades agreed

Mid July: Postgraduate Committee meets – funding decisions agreed

End of July: distribution of awards finalised

August and September:
- applicants notified of outcome by letter
- if successful, awards accepted

October: - first maintenance grants paid

INFORMATION FOR INSTITUTIONS

- 1 The AHRC operates three postgraduate schemes within an annual competition. There is a separate Guide for each scheme, but the basic information is the same for each. You will need to read the relevant sections of each Guide. Please note that we have updated the application forms and accompanying guidance notes. Students must complete the 2008 forms.
- 2 This section is a quick guide to the institution's role in respect of the application process. It highlights the key points, but is not a substitute for the detailed information provided in the rest of this Guide.

What is the role of the institution in the application process?

- 3 Institutions have three roles in the application process:
 - They are asked to provide information on former and current students by acting as referees and by completing the Degree Result (DR) and Postgraduate Report (PR) forms (these students could be applying for funding at another institution)
 - Chasing up DR and PR forms from institutions for students who are submitting an application for funding through their institution
 - they support, contribute to and submit the application form on behalf of students wishing to study at their institution.
- 4 Students can apply to the AHRC for funding only if they have been offered a place, either provisionally or firmly, on the programme of study for which they wish to apply, before the AHRC's deadline of 1 May 2008.
- 5 Students are asked to approach the institution to which they are applying, in the first instance, if they have queries about their eligibility or the eligibility of their programme of study. If you are unsure of their eligibility, please contact us before 1 April 2008. If you contact us and we agree that the student is eligible, please include a copy of the correspondence with the application form.
- 6 The student completes the first part of the application form, but after that they do not see the form again; it is submitted through the institution. The application process is a lengthy one and it helps all concerned if you publish a timetable for students, referees, departments and the Registry, Graduate School or equivalent, indicating when the various parts of the form should be completed. This will help to ensure that the application reaches the AHRC by the closing date of **1 May 2008**.
- 7 For the 2008 competition, the number of applications that at an institution can submit will be capped. The AHRC has written to all institutions informing them of the number of applications they may submit. Institutions will need to have a mechanism in place to select the applications it wishes to submit to the AHRC for assessment. Institutions do not have to fill their allocation of applications. In completing and submitting the form you are authorising and supporting the application. It is worth bearing in mind that the competition for awards is fierce, and it may not be helpful to the student to submit an application that has very little chance of success. We received 5,259 eligible applications in the 2007 Competition and 1,469 offers of award were accepted; this represents a success rate across the three schemes of 28%. The success rate (by acceptance) for doctoral applicants was 33%. You can help your students by making specific comments in Part III of the application form, tailored to the particular student,

and giving examples to illustrate your remarks. General statements that are not supported by evidence can disadvantage even the strongest applicants.

- 8 **Students who have already applied unsuccessfully for a doctoral award on two previous occasions are not eligible to apply**, i.e. they cannot apply in the Doctoral Awards Scheme for a third time. The only exception to this is if the applicant's research proposal or institution where he or she plans to undertake doctoral study has changed substantially from any previous application he or she has made. The applicant should make a case in the proposal to justify why he or she feels that the changes make them eligible to submit a third doctoral application.
- 9 There is a **minimum period of funding for doctoral applicants**: students studying full-time may apply for a minimum of one year's support; those studying part-time may apply for between twenty months and five years' support.
- 10 In specific cases, we will also allow students studying full-time to apply for up to four years' support and those studying part-time to apply for up to seven years' support. The eligibility criteria for this additional period of funding are outlined in Section 3.
- 11 We expect doctoral applicants to have been awarded, or to be undertaking, a formal Master's-level qualification. If the student does not have a formal qualification, the student and the institution will need to demonstrate sustained experience beyond first degree level, which exceptionally qualifies him/her to proceed to doctoral study. It is important to note that the length of the degree is not sufficient evidence for an applicant's preparedness to undertake research at doctoral level. The panels have commented about the large number of applications we receive from students with no Master's qualification who were unable to demonstrate their preparedness for doctoral study. It may therefore be helpful to discourage students who lack the necessary experience from applying for an AHRC award.
- 12 The institution is responsible for completing Part III of the form, but academic staff may also wish to advise the student about Part I of the form, in particular the section on 'Proposed Study', which forms a key part of the form. Panels have commented that the benefits of such advice are apparent in applications.
- 13 You should read the *Notes for completing the Doctoral Awards Scheme application form* (which can be downloaded as part of the application form) before completing Part III of the form. This includes:

An Institutional Statement – this should be completed by the Head of Department, or equivalent. This needs to be about the student and what the institution can provide to support the student on his/her course of study, in accordance with the AHRC's research training framework. In this section, we also expect institutions to address issues related to research ethics, health and safety and misconduct in relation to the research project. We also ask you to rank the student against other students applying for an AHRC award.

In 2008, institutions will not be required to submit a *Departmental Statement on Research training provision and strategy*.

Selecting the subject area - this should be completed by the Head of Department, or equivalent. Only one box should be ticked. This determines to which of our eight assessment panels the application is sent. If the work truly falls within the domain of more than one subject panel, and the application therefore needs to be

assessed by a subsidiary panel, the number of that panel should be written in the box provided.

The AHRC will no longer consider applications for ring-fenced doctoral awards. The ring-fenced scheme ran for three years (2004, 2005 and 2006 competitions) and has now finished.

Eligibility – this should be completed by the University or College authorities. We need to know whether the student is eligible for a full award (maintenance and fees) or a fees-only award. This is determined on the basis of the student's residency status.

Signature and stamp – the form should be signed by a senior member of the Registry staff. In signing the form, you are certifying that this application is complete and conforms to the regulations as set out in this Guide, and that you consider both the student and the programme of study to be eligible.

Overseas Students

- 14 The **UK institution** at which the student intends to study is asked to complete a PR form for students who completed, or are completing, their Master's-level qualification outside the UK. There is no PR equivalent of the DR(Overseas) form; there is only one PR form which is used for both UK and overseas students.
- 15 The institution at which the student intends to study in the UK is asked to complete a DR(Overseas) form for students who have completed their undergraduate degree outside the UK. All undergraduate degrees must have been awarded by 31 July 2008 for applicants to be eligible. If the applicant will not have completed his or her undergraduate degree by 31 July, you will need to refer to Section 5 to check that the applicant is eligible.
- 16 It is important that you check the qualifications are at the appropriate level for the student to be eligible to apply and that the DR(Overseas) form and the PR form are the appropriate forms for you to complete. Some overseas qualifications and their UK equivalents are given in this Guide along with the information about which form you should complete for a particular overseas qualification. If the qualification is not in the Guide, and you consult the National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the UK (UK NARIC) in making your decision, please include a copy of NARIC's advice with the application.
- 17 Students are asked to send you copies of their degree certificates (if they have completed their degree) and a transcript of their grades. Students are also asked to send you information on the marking scheme for the institution and their position within the cohort. We ask you to use this information to say what you consider to be the equivalent UK grade for their degree. Unless we specify otherwise, we only need the completed DR(Overseas) and PR forms. We do not need copies of the transcripts.

Submitting the application

- 18 Institutions **MUST** include a list of the applications they are submitting with the consignment of applications. A blank template for this list will have been sent to institutions in January and will specify the maximum number of applications you are allowed to submit to the 2008 Competition. The list you include with the applications should include each student's name, department and the scheme to which the student is applying. The final list should be signed and stamped by a senior member of Registry staff. We will contact you if any of the applications on the list are missing from the pack. If too many applications have been submitted,

we will contact you and ask you to confirm which of the applications you wish to put forward. The remainder will be withdrawn.

What is the role of the institution in respect of former students?

Referees

- 19 Academic members of staff might be approached to act as referees for former or current students. The assessment panels are asking for a realistic assessment of the student's abilities and, importantly, how well prepared they are to undertake the programme of work. Using examples to illustrate the quality of their performance greatly assists the assessors in distinguishing between the large numbers of excellent students applying for funding. If the student has not yet completed his/her Master's degree, then an indication of the likely degree result is essential information for the assessors. The student may request to see a copy of the reference provided under the Freedom of Information Act; you will have the choice of whether or not to allow the AHRC to release it.

Postgraduate Report Form

- 20 Students who have completed, or are completing, a Master's-level course at your institution will ask you to complete a Postgraduate Report (PR) form on their behalf.
- 21 You should provide details of the degree course and how it is marked and then go on to say how well the student performed on the course. Finally, we ask you to give a PR mark by ticking the appropriate box. It should be clear from the form why you have selected a particular PR mark.

The information provided in the PR form should be treated responsibly and in accordance with your Data Protection Policy. In 2008, we are requesting that the PR form be sent direct to the institution which is submitting the application NOT to the AHRC. For students who have already graduated prior to 2008, the PR form must be attached to the application form for that student and be submitted as part of the application. An application form without the relevant PR form will be treated as incomplete and will be made ineligible. For students who will not graduate until 2008, the PR form should be emailed to us at drprforms@ahrc.ac.uk by the relevant deadline of 6 June 2008. The PR form will include a statement to say that the student explicitly consents to their PR form being disclosed to the receiving HEI, and that if the receiving HEI does not receive the form by a given date then the receiving HEI will be entitled to, without further instruction from the student, act as an agent of the student and chase up the form on their behalf.

- 22 We are no longer requesting a PR(b) form for students who have commenced their doctoral study. To ensure that the assessors do receive information on their doctoral work, students who have already commenced their doctoral study should choose their supervisor as one of their referees. You should also comment on their progress in the institutional statement.
- 23 In addition, the AHRC is no longer accepting supplementary PR forms in the 2008 competition.

The Degree Results Form

- 24 Students who have completed, or are completing, an undergraduate degree at your institution will ask you to complete a Degree Results (DR) form on their behalf.
- 25 You should provide details of the degree course and how it is marked and then go on to say how well the student performed on the course. Finally, we ask you to give a DR mark by ticking the appropriate box. It should be clear from the form why you have selected a particular DR mark.
- 26 The information provided in the DR form should be treated responsibly and in accordance with your Data Protection Policy. In 2008, we are requesting that the DR form be sent direct to the institution which is submitting the application, NOT to the AHRC. For students who have already graduated prior to 2008, the DR form must be attached to the application form for that student and be submitted as part of the application. An application form without the relevant DR form will be treated as incomplete and will be made ineligible. For students who will not graduate until 2008, the DR form should be emailed to us at drprforms@ahrc.ac.uk by the relevant deadline of **11 July 2008**. The DR form will include a statement to say that the student explicitly consents to their DR form being disclosed to the receiving HEI, and that if the receiving HEI does not receive the form by a given date then the receiving HEI will be entitled to, without further instruction from the student, act as an agent of the student and chase up the form on their behalf.

What is the role of the institution in administering awards?

- 27 **From October 2007, the AHRC will be making all payments related to an award directly to the institution's finance office (rather than paying maintenance and any additional allowances directly to the student).** It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure that relevant payments are distributed to the appropriate student. Award holders are also advised to make the necessary arrangements with their institution about how best these payments can be distributed to them.

Dates for the diary

Action	Date
The closing date for all applications	1 May 2008
The submission date for DR and DR(Overseas) forms for students who have completed their undergraduate degree	1 May 2008
The submission date for DR and DR(Overseas) forms for students who will complete their undergraduate degree in 2008	As soon as possible, but by 11 July 2008, at the latest
The submission date for PR forms for students who have completed their Masters-level study	1 May 2008
The submission date for PR forms for students who will complete their Master's-level study in 2008	As soon as possible but by 6 June 2008, at the latest

SECTION 2 - ABOUT THE AHRC AND ITS POSTGRADUATE FUNDING

What is the AHRC?

- 28 The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) is the newest Research Council and the only one to fund research in arts and humanities subjects. It was established on 1 April 2005 with an annual budget of more than £80 million. It funds high quality research and postgraduate training in a huge range of subjects from history and English literature to design and dance. The AHRC is funded through the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) alongside the other Research Councils and operates on a UK-wide basis.
- 29 The AHRC's predecessor, the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) was established in October 1998 in response to a review of Higher Education, which recommended the creation of a research council for the arts and humanities. Implementing the recommendation formed part of the 2004 Higher Education Act and underlines the importance of high quality research in the arts and humanities for the cultural, creative, social and economic life of the nation.

What support does the Council provide?

- 30 The Council supports three major programmes:
- Research
 - Postgraduate Research and Training
 - Museums and Galleries.
- 31 You can find basic information about the various schemes in each programme, and more detailed information, guidance for applicants and application forms, on our website, <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk>.

What postgraduate funding does the Council provide?

- 32 The Council provides funding to enable students to study at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the UK at Master's and doctoral level.
- 33 The Council's postgraduate awards programme is administered in three schemes. Applicants must determine, on the basis of the guidance provided on each scheme, which is the most appropriate for the course of study they wish to pursue.
- 34 The three schemes, all of which operate across the whole of the AHRC's subject domain, are:

Research Preparation Master's Scheme – this scheme will provide support for students undertaking Master's courses that focus on advanced study and research training explicitly intended to provide a foundation for further research at doctoral level. In the creative and performing arts, including practice-led study, the scheme will also support students undertaking Master's courses that focus on advanced study and research training explicitly intended to provide a foundation for a career in research in the higher education sector. Awards will normally be for one year's full-time study or two years' part-time, but funding for two years' full-time study or four years' part-time study will exceptionally be considered, where the value and necessity of the additional period of training is demonstrated in the student's proposal and the Institutional case for support.

Professional Preparation Master's Scheme – this scheme will provide support for students undertaking Master's or Postgraduate Diploma courses that focus on developing high-level skills and competencies for professional practice in a field relevant to the content of the course. Awards will normally be for one year's full-

time study or two years' part-time study, but funding for two years' full-time study or four years' part-time study will exceptionally be considered, where the value and necessity of the additional period of training is demonstrated in the student's proposal and the Institutional case for support (a further exception is the longer courses in conservation of painting listed in Table 2 of the *Guide for Applicants for the Professional Preparation Master's Scheme*). Applicants can no longer apply for funding for the second year of a two year course that they have already commenced in the Professional Preparation Master's Scheme but **MUST** apply to us prior to the outset of their course.

Doctoral Awards Scheme – this scheme will provide support for a minimum of one year and up to three years of full-time study, or between twenty months and five years of part-time study, leading to a doctoral degree. Exceptionally, we will provide support for up to four years' full-time or up to seven years' part-time study (see Section 3).

- 35 There is a separate Guide for each of the above schemes. **This Guide covers the Doctoral Awards Scheme.**
- 36 Support for research students in all areas of the AHRC's subject domain is also available through the Council's Research Grants scheme. Under that scheme, academic members of staff may apply for grants to support research projects, including the costs of support for up to two research students who will work on doctoral projects related to the larger-scale project. The terms and conditions for studentships supported through the Research Grants scheme are the same as those under the schemes set out in this guide. For further details, please see the separate *Guide to the Research Grants Scheme*, which is available on our website.
- 37 In September 2004, the Council launched the Collaborative Doctoral Awards Scheme (CDA). The collaborative awards supported through this scheme encourage and develop collaboration between Higher Education Institution (HEI) departments and non-academic bodies, and enhance the employment related skills and training a research student gains during the course of his/her award. Applications for collaborative doctoral awards are made jointly by the HEI department and the collaborating organisation. There is an annual call for applications. The closing date was 29 November 2007 for projects to begin in October 2008. Please see our website for further details. Studentships for those that were successful are advertised by HEIs around April-June. The AHRC will publish a list of successful CDA projects in April 2008, but for information about studentships that may be available you will need to contact the HEI concerned.
- 38 In June 2006, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and the Scottish Funding Council announced the launch of five new collaborative centres as part of their joint £25 million Language Based Area Studies initiative. The initiative aims to create a world-class cadre of researchers who will enhance the UK's understanding of the Arabic-speaking world, China, Japan and Eastern Europe, including areas of the former Soviet Union. The development of the necessary language skills alongside the development of an in-depth understanding of these regions will be central to the work of the centres.

The five centres funded through the initiative are:

- the British Inter-university China Centre (collaboration between the University of Oxford, the University Bristol and the University of Manchester)
- The Centre for Russian, Central and East European Studies (collaboration between the University of Glasgow and the University of St Andrew's)

- The Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World (collaboration between the University of Edinburgh, Durham University and the University of Manchester)
- The White Rose East Asia Centre (collaboration between the University of Leeds and the University of Sheffield)
- The Centre for East European and Former Soviet Union Language Based Area Studies (collaboration between UCL, the University of Oxford and the University of Birmingham)

39 The centres are providing Master's studentships, PhD studentships and early career fellowships. The scheme is administered by the ESRC on behalf of the four funding organisations.

40 In 2005 the AHRC and ESRC set up a jointly funded scheme run in collaboration with the American Library of Congress (LoC). The Library of Congress scholarships provide the opportunity for AHRC or ESRC funded doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and research assistants based in UK Higher Education Institutions to travel to Washington DC to study for between 3 and 6 months at the Library of Congress, with access to the internationally renowned research collections held there. The Library of Congress is the research arm of Congress and is the largest library in the world, with more than 130 million items. The collections include more than 29 million books which cover a broad range of subjects from Naval Science to Fine Arts. In addition to any stipend granted through the AHRC doctoral award the LoC scheme offers an additional stipend and flight costs. The closing date is 31 January 2008 for scholarships taking place in the following academic year. For more information about the scheme please see the Postgraduate Award Holders area of our website.

41 The closing date for applications in the Research Preparation Masters scheme, the Professional Preparation Master's scheme and the Doctoral Awards scheme is **5.00pm on 1 May 2008**. You must ensure that your application is received by the AHRC by this date if you wish to apply for funding for a programme of study that commences in October 2008. The other schemes mentioned above such as the Collaborative Doctoral Awards Scheme, the LoC scholarship scheme and the Language Based Area Studies scheme all have individual closing dates which can be found on our website.

A separate *Guide for Postgraduate Award Holders* provides information for students who currently hold an AHRC postgraduate award and for those responsible for the supervision and organisation of their studies. This Guide is available on the AHRC's website.

Future Changes to Postgraduate Funding

42 The AHRC established a working group in March 2006 to review whether the student-led, Open-Competition remained the most appropriate and effective way for the AHRC to allocate its postgraduate funding.

43 Following on from the recommendations of the working group the AHRC will be changing the way it runs its postgraduate competition for students who will commence study in the academic year 2009/10. The AHRC will be introducing two new postgraduate competitions to replace the current Open Competition. These are:

- Block Grant Partnership (BGP) - eligible institutions will submit bids for five years' worth of award allocations. The competition will run every fourth year of the five year cycle. In order to be eligible to apply in the first round,

institutions must have been offered an average of eight or more awards per annum in the 2003-07 Open Competitions

- AHRC Studentship Competition - will provide students with the opportunity to submit an individual bid for an award at an institution which does not hold a BGP, and will be run in a similar way to the current open competition.
- 44 The aim of the new competitions is to facilitate long-term engagement with institutions. They will enable institutions which receive large numbers of AHRC awards to work strategically and enable long-term planning, whilst also enabling the funding of pockets of excellence and capacity building within the arts and humanities at institutions who traditionally receive smaller number of awards and therefore would not constitute a 'block' award. The Postgraduate Committee and the AHRC have been working since early 2007 on the mechanisms to implement the two new postgraduate competitions. Several consultation events were held between April and July to gain feedback from the community on the changes. Please see [Key Recommendations](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#), available on our website, for more information on the implementation of the schemes.
- 45 In November 2007, the AHRC published the Guidance notes for the BGP scheme on the website. Please follow the link below for further information on the scheme.
http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/university_staff/future_changes_pg_funding.asp

What can applicants expect from the AHRC?

- 46 When you submit an application to the AHRC you can expect:
- fair and efficient handling of the application throughout the assessment process
 - not to be treated less favourably because of age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins, religion or similar philosophical belief or spent criminal conviction
 - written notification of the outcome of your application, normally within two months of the Postgraduate Committee meeting.
- 47 The AHRC adheres to the data protection principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. In accordance with the Act, personal data provided will be processed by the AHRC and may be held on a computerised database and/or manual files.
- 48 If you have any queries about the AHRC's postgraduate programme please contact us at the address below. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the relevant Awards Officer, details are available on our website (www.ahrc.ac.uk)

Postgraduate Programmes
Arts and Humanities Research Council
Whitefriars
Lewins Mead
Bristol
BS1 2AE

Tel: 0117 987 6543
Fax: 0117 987 6544
E-mail: pgenquiries@ahrc.ac.uk

KEY TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AN AHRC POSTGRADUATE AWARD

- AHRC postgraduate award holders must be fully registered as a full-time or part-time doctoral student for the programme of study at the Higher Education Institution (HEI), and for the period of time specified in their application and in the offer of award. If the student's registration ceases for any reason (other than temporary suspension of study), the Council will terminate the award. The Council expects that, by the end of the period of funding, award holders will have achieved the qualification for which their award was granted. Institutions are required to inform the Council immediately if students interrupt their studies or cease them completely.
- In accepting the award, students are authorising the institution to disclose to the AHRC any information that the Council requests regarding the progress of their studies and the submission of their thesis. They will also be authorising the institution to provide to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) any such information requested by HESA on the Council's behalf.
- Doctoral award holders and their institution must inform the Council immediately if the student's doctoral thesis is submitted earlier than expected and before the end of the AHRC funding. In such cases, it may be necessary for the Council to reclaim any maintenance grant or fees overpaid to the student or institution following submission.
- Awards are made on the understanding that the student's supervisor and other institutional authorities will provide him/her with support, supervision and training of high quality, and that the appropriate officers of the institution, both academic and administrative, will co-operate in ensuring that the award holder is supported in this way.
- Award holders should inform us immediately if they are applying for, or receive, a grant or an award from another body to support their postgraduate work, especially in the form of payment of fees or a maintenance grant. Award holders may not hold two awards for the same purpose concurrently.
- Awards are made to enable students to study at a HEI in the United Kingdom (UK), and award holders are expected to remain resident in the UK, and close to the institution at which they are registered, throughout the period of their award. Award holders are expected to attend their institution and to maintain regular contact with their supervisor and other institutional authorities throughout their award. The only exceptions to these requirements are periods of absence due to fieldwork, study visits or conferences that are an essential part of the course of study.
- Award holders are normally expected to take up their awards on 1 October of the year in which they applied for funding. Payment of awards will usually begin in early October. A later start date may be possible in exceptional circumstances, for example, in case of illness, or where a student needs to give notice to an employer. A formal application to delay the start date of an award must be made to the Council through the relevant institutional authorities, who should provide written support for such a request. If an award holder is unable to take up his/her award in the year for which it was awarded, the Council will normally rescind that award and the student will have to apply again in the next year's competition.
- Award holders must remain fully registered on the relevant programme of study as a full-time or part-time student (as appropriate to their award) for the full duration of the award. Registration may be as:
 - a full-time or part-time student for a doctoral programme

- o a full-time or part-time probationary or prospective doctoral student for research or a tailor-made programme (such as a Probationary Research Student or for an MPhil degree), and by the final year of the award, as a full-time or part-time doctoral student.

SECTION 3 - ABOUT THE DOCTORAL AWARDS SCHEME

What does the doctoral awards scheme offer?

49 Doctoral awards are provided in support of studies leading to a doctoral degree. Support can be provided for a minimum of one year and up to three years of full-time study, or between twenty months and five years of part-time study. Exceptionally, we will provide support for up to four years of full-time or up to seven years of part-time study. You may apply to work in any area within the AHRC's subject domain.

What is the AHRC's definition of the doctoral thesis?

50 You are expected to produce a thesis, which we define as the work submitted for the degree of PhD. It should be understood to include practice-based doctoral research as well as text-based. We expect the thesis to be a piece of work that:

- exhibits substantial evidence of original scholarship and contains material that can be prepared for publication or exhibition
- can be produced by a capable, well-qualified and diligent student, properly supervised and supported, within the period of the award.

51 Many institutions make clear in their regulations a similar concept of the quality, length and scope of the doctoral thesis. If you are in any doubt whether an institution is prepared to accept, supervise and examine you within this concept of a doctoral degree, you should ensure that you clarify this with them before submitting your application for an award.

What is the AHRC's definition of research?

52 The Council's definition of research is primarily concerned with the definition of research processes, rather than outputs. This definition is built around three key features and your application for funding must address all of these in full in order to be considered eligible for support:

- it must define a series of **research questions** or problems that will be addressed in the course of the research. It must also define its objectives in terms of seeking to enhance knowledge and understanding relating to the questions or problems to be addressed
- it must specify a **research context** for the questions or problems to be addressed. You must specify why it is important that these particular questions or problems should be addressed; what other research is being or has been conducted in this area; and what particular contribution your project will make to the advancement of creativity, insights, knowledge and understanding in the area
- it must specify the **research methods** for addressing and answering the research questions or problems. You must state how, in the course of the research project, you will seek to answer the questions, or advance available knowledge and understanding of the problems. You should also explain the rationale for your chosen research methods and why you think they provide the most appropriate means by which to answer the questions.

What about practice-led research?

53 This definition of research provides a distinction between research and practice *per se*. Creative output can be produced or practice undertaken as an integral part of a research process. The Council would expect this practice to be

accompanied by some form of documentation of the research process, as well as some form of textual analysis or explanation to support its position and to demonstrate critical reflection. Creativity or practice which involves no such processes is not eligible for support from the Council.

What length of funding is available?

54 Doctoral awards are provided to support a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years of full-time study or a minimum of twenty months and a maximum of five years of part-time study leading to a doctoral degree. If you have already received support for postgraduate study or if you have already commenced your doctoral study, the period of your award may be reduced.

Can I apply for more than three years' full-time or five years' part-time funding?

55 In specific cases, we will provide support for up to four years of full-time or seven years of part-time doctoral study. The extended time is intended for students whose research cannot be undertaken in full without the acquisition of new skills or knowledge that cannot be gained through a research preparation Master's course and, without which, the doctoral research would be incomplete.

56 To be eligible for the extended funding, your research must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- the research cannot be undertaken in full without the acquisition of specific language skills
- the research cannot be undertaken in full without learning specific new, high-level methodological skills, for example, complex quantitative skills
- the research cannot be undertaken in full without the development of very significant and demanding new discipline-specific skill, for example, palaeographical, papyrological or epigraphical skills, or where a high degree of collaboration with other disciplines necessitates a significant period of additional time to develop the requisite knowledge of other areas
- the research cannot be undertaken in full without fieldwork being undertaken which presents significant challenges, for example, of a methodological or practical nature.

57 The acquisition of such skills or knowledge must be integral to the doctoral study as a whole. Extended funding will not be considered appropriate where additional time is requested for writing-up, or where assessors consider that the acquisition of relevant skills or knowledge could reasonably have been provided through training as part of a Master's course, or could be provided as part of a standard three-year full-time or five-year part-time doctoral programme.

58 If you wish to be considered for the extended period of funding, you will need to make a specific case in your application. As part of the institutional statement, the department or institution at which you will be studying will also be asked to comment on why extended study is necessary for the research you wish to undertake. It will be asked to provide details of the support that will be provided to ensure that the additional skills or knowledge are acquired, including any training that will be made available and how any additional costs will be met. The assessors will consider the case that you and the institution have made. If the panel does not consider that an adequate case has been made, the proposal will be considered for a three-year doctoral award or part-time equivalent.

59 The request for an extended award can only be made at the application stage. The panel's decision on the period of award will be final. There will be no scope to consider requests for extended study once the award has commenced.

60 The option to apply for up to four years' full-time (or up to seven years' part-time funding) is available only to students who have not already commenced their doctoral study.

Do you have submission deadlines?

61 As a full-time doctoral award holder, you are expected to submit your thesis within the period of your award, or at most four years after the start of your award. If you have received four years' support, you will still be expected to submit your thesis within four years from the start of your award. If you are a part-time award holder, you are expected to submit your thesis within the period of your award or at most seven years after the start of your award. If you have received seven years' support, you are still expected to submit your thesis within seven years from the start of your award.

What if I have already received funding for postgraduate study?

62 If you have already received public funding for postgraduate study, the funding available to you from the AHRC may be reduced on the basis that four years' full-time funding or seven years' part-time funding is the maximum you can receive. The Council does not make any contribution to maintenance or tuition fees during the 'writing up' year.

63 If you have completed, or are currently following, a full-time Master's or similar course lasting up to one year, or an individually-tailored programme of research training, you may apply for a three-year, full-time studentship.

64 If you have completed, or are currently following, a full-time Master's course (such as an MPhil) lasting between one and two years, your award may be restricted in length. If you have already been supported from public funds for two years' full-time study, you will be eligible to apply for an award only for a further two years' full-time study, bringing the total length of public support to a maximum of four years.

65 If you have already completed one year or more of full-time doctoral study, however funded, your award will be reduced in length accordingly. If you have completed more than one year of part-time study, however funded, your award may be reduced in length, bearing in mind that 20 months of part-time study is equivalent to 12 months of full-time study.

66 There are two exceptions to the restriction on funding to four years' for full-time study or seven years' for part-time study:

- if the panel accepts your case for four years' full-time doctoral study (or seven years' part-time) and you have already received funding for one year's Master's study (or two years' part-time) then the Council will provide support for the full four years (or seven years' part-time)
- if you have been funded for two years' full-time Master's study (four years' part-time) you may make the case that three years doctoral study (five years' part-time) is required because of the complexity of your doctoral study and the need to acquire further skills. Your case should be made on the basis of the criteria for extended support as outlined in paragraph 56. It will need to be clear that the additional expertise could not be obtained through a two-year Master's course. If the panel does not accept the case that an additional three years' doctoral study is required, your funding will be restricted to two years (or part-time equivalents).

SECTION 4 – RESEARCH TRAINING

What does the AHRC mean by ‘research training’?

67 The AHRC uses ‘research training’ in its broadest sense to describe the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will need to successfully pursue his/her studies, complete a high quality thesis and prepare for a career once his/her studies have been completed. We aim not to be prescriptive about the type of training or how it should be delivered. ‘Training’ encompasses all the opportunities – formal and informal – available to postgraduate students to develop as researchers and practitioners in their fields and as highly qualified individuals in preparation for their future careers.

68 Research training is an issue that is very much on the current agenda for higher education. The focus is on the assessment of needs and the provision of training to meet those needs. The AHRC considers training to be an ongoing process which takes place throughout a student’s studies and is adapted as new needs arise. This means a programme of monitoring and assessment of the student’s needs at regular intervals.

What is the ‘Research Training Framework’?

69 The AHRC is committed to supporting the provision of high quality research training for research students. We have therefore developed a ‘framework’ of research training requirements. The framework is founded on a needs-based approach to the provision of individual students, and is sensitive to the needs and requirements of the arts and humanities, whilst also taking full account of the wider development of key transferable skills and competencies.

70 The research training framework is intended as a means of enabling institutions to reassure the Council that the doctoral students it funds are well supported and are receiving appropriate and relevant preparation and training to enable them to complete a high-quality thesis and to develop a range of knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for their future employment. The framework sets a minimum threshold of expected provision, and the Council has supplemented this with examples of good practice in order to encourage institutions to enhance and improve their existing provision.

71 It is expected that both subject-specific and generic, transferable skills training will be provided. The former aims to ensure that postgraduate students are equipped to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to their particular field of research or study. Such training must be specifically tailored to the needs of individual students and their fields of study or research topics, and must take account of the differing demands of text-based and practice-based study. Some of this training may be appropriately delivered at department (or equivalent) level; other aspects will be delivered individually, often, in the case of doctoral students, by the supervisor.

How does it apply to me?

72 Institutions and departments, or equivalent, are expected to have in place a programme of research training from which an appropriate selection is made to meet your needs. In some cases, elements of research training may be more appropriately provided through collaboration among departments or institutions.

73 The institution will be asked to provide information in Part III of the application form on your particular training requirements and how they will be met and monitored. In other words, how the institution will ensure that you acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills you need in order to successfully complete your studies. We recommend that you find out about the training provision of the

institution at which you plan to study as this will have an impact on your application.

74 The AHRC's framework of research training requirements is described in more detail in Appendix A.

What training am I expected to receive?

75 The AHRC expects your department, or equivalent, to undertake an analysis of your training needs, and to provide for you an agreed programme of training. This programme should be based on the skills and competencies you have already achieved, and should meet the training needs identified to enable you to reach an appropriately high level of knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies. The Council recognises that there are some skills that all research students need in order to undertake research effectively, some skills that are relevant to particular topics of study, and some that will be developed through the process of conducting research. The training you receive should always be relevant to your experience and requirements, as well as to your discipline and research topic.

76 Institutions and departments, or equivalent, are expected to have in place a programme (or menu) of research training from which an appropriate selection is made to meet your needs. We expect your institution and department to provide a continuing programme of research training throughout the period of your doctoral study, recognising that some skills are more appropriately developed after the first year of doctoral research.

77 The delivery and relevance of your agreed research training should be reviewed at least annually and any outstanding, new, or changing needs should be identified and incorporated into the plans for your future training provision.

78 The AHRC, along with the Research Councils, offers additional funding for its doctoral award holders to attend a three- or five-day GRAD School. The UK GRAD Schools provide a range of activities focussed on developing personal effectiveness and communication, team-building and career management skills. See www.grad.ac.uk for more details.

What is the 'Research Training Fund'?

79 We will be allocating an additional annual sum of £850 per doctoral award holder to help institutions to meet their students' training needs. The sum will be paid directly to the institution in December each year. Institutions are expected to use this money to develop and enhance their research training provision for all arts and humanities students.

80 Through a separate scheme, the Council will also make funds available to facilitate collaborative research training projects. The scheme has been running since 2004 and details of the awards can be found on our website.

What is meant by 'skills training'?

81 The Research Councils and the AHRC have produced a joint statement of skills training requirements for research students, which sets out a common view of the skills doctoral students are expected to develop during their research training. The Research Councils' joint statement, which is available on our website, forms Appendix 3 of the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) revised Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/default.asp>.

82 The AHRC does not wish to be prescriptive about the details of the training institutions should provide, but we expect you to develop certain knowledge, understanding and skills. Generic training relates to the skills needed by all arts and humanities research students, regardless of their specific subjects. This training may be appropriately delivered at school, faculty or even institution level. Development of the core generic, transferable skills listed below will be a compulsory training requirement for all research students.

- Written communication skills appropriate for the academic context and beyond
- Oral presentation skills, including giving research papers and discussing others' research findings
- Designing and managing a project
- ICT skills, including appropriate word processing and other ICT skills (such as creating and using spreadsheets and databases) as relevant to the research topic
- Bibliographical skills and contextualising practice-based research
- Identifying and using web-based resources
- Record-keeping and record management
- Personal and career development, and broader employment-related skills (such as participating in workshops and conferences, or if students undertake undergraduate teaching duties, relevant support and training).

83 Your institution will be expected to ensure that you are appropriately prepared and have opportunities to develop in areas that are relevant to the demands of your discipline. Training in these areas must be specifically related to your needs and your research topic, and must take account of the differing demands of text-based and practice-led research. Examples of key subject-specific knowledge, understanding and skills are:

- understanding theoretical issues, the nature of evidence and argument, and the relationships between practice, theory and criticism
- developing research methods and skills and practical techniques appropriate to the project
- developing knowledge and understanding of the research context of the project, and of trends in the discipline
- developing knowledge, understanding and skills in the analysis and synthesis of research material
- developing knowledge and understanding of related disciplines, where appropriate

- specialist knowledge, understanding and skills such as an additional language, methodology or technique.

Will my training be monitored?

84 Your institution will be required to explain on the application form what systems are in place for assessing and reviewing your training needs, at least on an annual basis. This will enable them to monitor the effectiveness of your training provision and to ascertain whether additional skills' training is required, for example, to meet the demands of the project. This regular review process should involve you, your supervisor and one member of academic staff independent of the supervisory team, e.g. the Head of Department (or equivalent).

SECTION 5 - ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

- 85 To be eligible for an AHRC postgraduate award, you must meet certain academic and residency criteria.
- 86 To be eligible for an award under the Doctoral Awards Scheme, you and your programme of study must meet additional criteria.

ACADEMIC CRITERIA

- 87 In order to be eligible for an award from the AHRC, you must meet the following conditions:
- You must be applying for funding to study at a **Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the UK** that is recognised and funded by one of the four UK higher education funding councils, or at an institution whose postgraduate courses are validated by a recognised HEI. A 'recognised' HEI is one that is able to award its own degrees. If you are in any doubt about whether your course or institution is eligible for AHRC funding, please contact us well before the closing date of **1 May** and, if possible, by 1 April 2008
 - By the time you apply, you must have been **accepted**, either firmly or provisionally, by a HEI to undertake the programme of postgraduate study for which you are seeking funding
 - At the end of your AHRC award you must be in a position to be awarded a **publicly-recognised postgraduate degree**.

What academic qualifications do I need?

- 88 You should have gained a first degree (usually an Honours degree, such as a BA, BMus, BSc, LLB or equivalent) from a recognised HEI, or be an undergraduate expecting to graduate before **31 July 2008**. Other qualifications may be considered only exceptionally. **If your undergraduate degree will not be awarded by 31 July, then you will not be eligible to apply in this year's competition.**
- 89 Information about your undergraduate study forms an important part of the assessment process. All applicants must submit a completed **Degree Results (DR) form** by 1 May, or by 11 July if you are graduating in 2008.
- 90 Candidates without a first degree may apply for an AHRC award only if they are able to demonstrate substantial equivalent and relevant experience that has prepared them to undertake their proposed course of study. This exception cannot be applied to candidates who are currently undertaking an undergraduate degree but who will not gain that degree by 31 July. You might wish to contact the institution at which you plan to study, or the AHRC, to check your eligibility before applying.
- 91 In addition, you should normally have, or be studying for, a Master's degree or similar postgraduate qualification. Information about your postgraduate studies forms an important part of the assessment process. You must submit a **Postgraduate Report (PR) form** by 1 May if you already have your Master's qualification, or by 6 June if you will not complete your degree until 2008.

Can I apply if I don't have a Master's qualification?

92 If you do not have experience of formal postgraduate study, you may apply for an award **only** if you can show in your application evidence of sustained experience beyond first degree level that is specifically relevant to your proposed research topic, and could be considered equivalent to Master's study. You and your institution will need to justify in your application why this experience qualifies you **exceptionally** as prepared for doctoral research without prior formal postgraduate training. Please note that the length of the degree is not, in itself, evidence for preparedness to undertake doctoral studies. On their own, the following are not considered as 'exceptional' in terms of qualifying you for doctoral study:

- an undergraduate MA from Oxford or Cambridge
- a four-year undergraduate degree
- the completion of a dissertation as part of your undergraduate degree
- a first class undergraduate degree.

93 If you have an undergraduate MA from a Scottish University, or a degree from an overseas institution which is classed by NARIC as qualifying you for postgraduate study at the institution's discretion, you and your institution must make the case in your application as to why your course and, if applicable, other experience has prepared you for doctoral study.

94 If you do not have a formal Master's qualification but you have already commenced doctoral study, you should not assume that this will be considered as adequate preparation for doctoral study. The assessors will still be seeking information as to how the training and development you have received is equivalent to that obtained through a Master's course and, therefore, prepares you to continue doctoral study. You and your institution must address these points in your application.

What if I have already commenced my doctoral study?

95 You are eligible to apply if you have already commenced your doctoral study, providing you will be studying for at least one more year (excluding your writing up period). If, by the start of your award, you will have been studying for a year or more, the period of your award may be reduced accordingly. The AHRC will only provide support for students who are fully registered. We will not provide funding for students who are in their 'writing up' year. If you have been studying part-time, you may apply to the AHRC to continue your studies full-time.

What if I have already undertaken doctoral study?

96 If, by the start of your award, you will have already gained or completed the requirements for a doctoral degree in any subject, however funded, you are not eligible to apply for an award under this scheme.

97 If you have already undertaken all, or part, of a course of doctoral study, either in the UK or overseas, i.e. not the course for which you are applying to the AHRC for funding, then you may not be eligible to apply. Please contact the AHRC for advice before applying.

I am currently undertaking an MPhil, can I upgrade?

98 If you have been funded by the AHRB or AHRC to undertake a Master's degree, you may not upgrade to doctoral study, as we expect you to gain a Master's qualification at the end of your Master's award. If you are intending to proceed to doctoral study, you will need to apply for doctoral funding through this

scheme. Your application for doctoral study will be assessed alongside, and in the same way as, applicants who funded their Master's study by other means. If we have supported you to undertake your Master's course, we will not permit you to treat your Master's work as the first year of your doctoral study. If this appears to be the case then your doctoral funding will be reduced accordingly.

- 99 If your MPhil is supported by other means, you may apply to the AHRC for your further study at doctoral level.

I plan to register as an MPhil student, to which scheme should I apply?

- 100 If you will be registering as an MPhil student with the intention of proceeding immediately to doctoral study, without gaining a Master's-level qualification, you should apply through the Doctoral Awards Scheme rather than the Research Preparation Master's Scheme. If you intend to undertake doctoral study, but you will gain an MPhil qualification at the end of your initial period of study, you should apply through the Research Preparation Master's Scheme.

Am I eligible to apply if my undergraduate degree is from an institution outside the UK?

- 101 You are eligible to apply for an award if you have gained, or are studying for, your undergraduate and/or Master's-level degrees at an HEI outside the UK that is equivalent to a relevant UK degree. If your undergraduate degree will not be awarded by 31 July 2008, then you will not be eligible to apply in this year's competition. The UK institution at which you plan to study should submit the **Degree Results Overseas (DR(Overseas)) and the PR forms** on your behalf. You will have to submit a copy of your degree certificates (if you have completed your degrees) and transcripts of your grades to the UK institution at which you intend to study. This will enable the UK institution to make an assessment of your academic qualifications and their relationship to UK degree qualifications. It would also help the UK institution if you or your overseas institution(s) could provide information on the grading scheme for your degree(s) and your position within the cohort(s) (i.e. your position amongst the other students on the same course, in the same year).
- 102 The AHRC uses information supplied by the National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the UK (UK NARIC) to ascertain the type of UK degree to which your overseas degree is equivalent. This information is important in determining whether you are eligible for the Scheme and in deciding which form(s) you need to complete. Some examples of overseas degrees and their UK equivalents are given in Table 1 (the information has been taken from the NARIC website and is correct as of November 2007). These degrees have been included because they are the degrees most frequently held by AHRC applicants with overseas qualifications. If your degree is not included in the Table, and you are unsure if you are eligible or which form to complete, please consult the institution at which you will be studying. The institution should include with your application copies of any documentary evidence it has used to reach a decision, particularly where this relates to your eligibility for this Scheme. It is important that you submit the correct form(s), so please do consult your institution for advice if you are unsure.
- 103 If you, or the institution, are in correspondence with the AHRC regarding your eligibility status, resulting in our confirming that you are eligible, please include copies of this correspondence with your application form. Owing to the very large volume of applications we receive, it is impossible for us to match queries dealt with before the competition to specific applications.
- 104 If your degree has been classed by NARIC as 'Holders of this award possess the formal requirements for postgraduate study (including PhD) at the UK

institution's discretion', your UK institution should submit the **DR(overseas) form (not the PR)**. They should use the form to make the case that your course does qualify you to undertake doctoral study.

Country	Degree title	UK equivalent	DR(Overseas) or PR form required?
Albania	Diplomë universitare	Diploma of Higher Education	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Albania	Kandidat i Shkencave (Candidate of Sciences)	Master's degree	PR form
Belgium	Bachelor degree (courses from 2004)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Belgium	Licentiaat	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Belgium	Master's degree (courses from 2004)	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Magistar	Master's degree	PR form
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Visoko Obrazovanja	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Bulgaria	Bachelor degree (courses from 2001)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Bulgaria	Batchelor Degree	BTEC / SQA Higher National Diploma (HND) standard / Foundation degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Bulgaria	Magistr	Master's degree	PR form
Croatia	Magistar / Level VII/2	Master's degree	PR form
Cyprus	Bachelor degree (from a recognised higher education institution)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Cyprus	Ptychion (from University of Cyprus)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Czech Republic	Bakalár	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Czech Republic	Magistr (courses from 2001)	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Denmark	Bachelor degree	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Denmark	Candidatus Philosophiae	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Finland	Kandidaatti / kandidat (lower academic degree, min. 120 credits new system) (courses 1996 - 2005)	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Finland	Kandidaatti / kandidat (lower academic degree, min. 120 credits new system) (courses from 2005)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Finland	Maisteri / magister (higher academic degree, min. 160 credits/5 years) (courses from 1996)	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Magistar	Master's degree	PR form
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Visoko Obrazovanja (second-level degree obtained on completion of a four- to six-year course)	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
France	Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies	Master's degree	PR form
France	Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées	Master's degree	PR form
France	Licence (courses before 2002)	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
France	Licence (courses from 2002)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
France	Magistère	Master's degree	PR form
France	Maitrise	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form (include results of Licence)
France	Mastère Spécialisé	Master's degree	PR form
Germany	Aufbaustudium	Master's degree	PR form
Germany	Bachelor	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Germany	Diplom	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Germany	Erstes Staatsexamen	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Germany	Lizentiat	Master's degree	PR form
Germany	Magister Artium	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Germany	Master	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Germany	Zweites Staatsexamen	Master's degree	PR form
Germany	Zwischenzeugnis / Vordiplom	Certificate of Higher Education	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Greece	Ptychion (awarded by AEI)	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Greece	Ptychion (awarded by TEI)	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Hungary	Egyetemi OKlevel	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Hungary	Foiskola OKlevel	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Italy	Corso di Laurea Specialistica	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Italy	Corso di Master Universitario di Primo Livello	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself

Italy	Corso di Master Universitario di Secondo Livello	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Italy	Diploma di Laurea (after 1999 reforms)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Italy	Diploma di Laurea (prior to 1999 reforms);	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Italy	Diploma di Specialista	Postgraduate diploma (PGDip)	PR form
Italy	Licenza di Accademia di Belle Arti	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Latvia	Egyetemi Doktor (1983-1996)	Master's degree	PR form
Latvia	Magistrs	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Latvia	Magistrs (courses from 2000)	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Latvia	Postgraduate Diploma (professional programme)	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Latvia	Professional Bachelor degree	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Lithuania	Bakalauras (Bachelor degree)	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Lithuania	Bakalauras (Bachelor degree) (courses from 2000)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Lithuania	Magistras (Master's degree)	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Malta	General degree	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Malta	Honours degree	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Malta	Master's degree	Master's degree	PR form
Netherlands	Doctoraal; Bachelor degree (courses from 2002)	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Netherlands	Kandidaatsexamen	Diploma of Higher Education	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Norway	Bachelor degree (courses from 2003)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Norway	Candidatus Magisterii	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Norway	Magister Artium (mag. art.)	Master of Philosophy degree (MPhil)	PR form
Norway	Master of Philosophy	Master's degree	PR form
Norway	Master's degree (courses from 2003)	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Poland	Bachelor degree (courses from 2003)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Poland	Licencjat / Inzynier	BTEC / SQA Higher National Diploma (HND) standard / Foundation degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself

Poland	Magister (with subject title) (prior to 2003 reforms)	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Poland	Masters degree (courses from 2003)	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Portugal	Bacharel / Bacharelato	BTEC / SQA Higher National Diploma (HND) standard / Foundation degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Portugal	Diploma de Estudos Superiores Especializados (DESE)	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Portugal	Licenciado	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Portugal	Master's degree	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Portugal	Mestrado / Mestra	Master's degree	PR form
Romania	Diploma de Inginer	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Romania	Diploma de Licenta	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Romania	Diploma de Master	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Serbia	Diplom Visokog Obrazovanja (second-level degree obtained on completion of a four to six-year course)	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Serbia	Magistar	Master's degree	PR form
Slovakia	Bakalár (courses from 2002)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Slovakia	Magister / Inzinier (formerly Absolvent Vysokej školy) / Professional title	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Slovenia	Magister	Master's degree	PR form
Slovenia	Professional Diploma	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Slovenia	University Diploma	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Slovenia	Visoko Obrazovanja (until 1999)	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Sweden	Kandidatexamen (min 120 credits)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Sweden	Licentiatexamen (Licentiate)	Master of Philosophy degree (MPhil)	PR form
Sweden	Magisterexamen (min 160 credits)	Master's degree	PR form
Switzerland	Diplom / Diplôme; Lizentiat / Licence; Staatsdiplom / Diplôme d'Etat	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form

Switzerland	Fachhochschule (FH) /Bachelor degree from Universities of Applied Sciences (post 2001)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Switzerland	Master's Degree	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Switzerland	Vordiplomprüfung II / Zwischenprüfung / Propédeutique II / Examen Préliminaire II / Demi-Licence	Diploma of Higher Education	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Turkey	Lisans Diplomasi	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Turkey	Yüksek Lisans Diplomasi	Master's degree	PR form
Ukraine	Dyplom Bakalavra (Bachelor degree)	Bachelor (Ordinary) degree	Not equivalent to Honours degree, and therefore not normally eligible by itself
Ukraine	Dyplom Bakalavra (Bachelor degree) (when undertaken as a Bologna degree from 2005)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form
Ukraine	Dyplom Magistra (Master's degree)	Bachelor (Honours) degree	DR(Overseas) form
Ukraine	Dyplom Magistra (Master's degree) (when undertaken as a Bologna degree from 2005)	Taught Master's degree	PR form
Ukraine	Specialist Diploma (Completed after 1991)	Bachelor degree	DR(Overseas) form

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

105 There are two types of award:

- A full award – this covers the cost of approved tuition fees and provides a maintenance grant
- A fees-only award – this covers the cost of approved tuition fees, but no maintenance grant is provided.

106 In order to be eligible for one of these awards, you must meet certain conditions relating to residence. This section describes these eligibility criteria.

How is my residency status determined?

107 The institution at which you intend to study will be responsible for determining your residency status, based on the information you provide, and in accordance with the rules followed by the Research Councils. **Your institution should be your initial point of contact for any queries you have concerning your residency status.**

108 If you, or the institution, are in correspondence with the AHRC regarding your eligibility status, resulting in our confirming that you are eligible, please include copies of this correspondence with your application form. Owing to the very large volume of applications we receive, it is impossible for us to match queries dealt with before the competition to specific applications.

109 The AHRC reserves the right to contact your institution for additional information on your residency status and to take the final decision regarding your eligibility for an award.

Am I eligible for a full award?

110 A full award covers both the cost of tuition fees and a maintenance grant. To be eligible for a full award, you must show that you have a relevant connection with the UK. This is usually determined through residence. By this we mean a physical presence in the UK. British citizenship in itself does not satisfy the residential eligibility requirement.

111 A relevant connection with the UK may be established if:

- you have been ordinarily resident* in the UK or Islands throughout the three-year period immediately preceding the start of the course; and
- you have not been resident in the UK, during any part of that three-year period, wholly or mainly for the purposes of full-time education (EU students should refer to paragraph 112)
- you have settled status in the UK within the meaning of the Immigration Act 1971 (i.e. you are not subject to any restriction on the period for which you may stay).
- You are a UK Armed Forces personnel on active service abroad, and your children, spouse or civil partner are regarded as ordinarily resident in the UK.

*'Ordinarily resident' is defined as a 'habitual and normal residence from choice and for a settled purpose throughout the prescribed period, apart from temporary or occasional absences of the applicant, their spouse, civil partner or parent'.¹

I am an EU national, am I eligible to apply and will I receive a full award?

- 112 If you are a non-UK, EU national, you are eligible for a full award if you can establish a relevant connection with the UK and Islands, i.e. if you have been ordinarily resident in the UK throughout the three year period immediately preceding the start of your course. If the three year period of residence in the UK has been wholly or mainly for the purpose of receiving full-time education, you will only be eligible for a full award if you were ordinarily resident in the EEA immediately prior to the three year period of full-time education.
- 113 If you are a national of a Member State of the European Union other than the UK, and you have not been ordinarily resident in the UK for the three years prior to the start of your course, you may be eligible to apply for a **fees-only** award, i.e. an award which provides payment of fees but not a maintenance grant. You must have been ordinarily resident in the EU, in the same way as UK candidates must be ordinarily resident in the UK, and have been accepted to study at a Higher Education Institution in the UK.
- 114 The countries of the EU are currently: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.
- 115 Please note that fees-only award holders are now eligible to apply for additional support towards the cost of study visits in the UK or abroad, attending a conference abroad and for Disabled Student's Allowance.

Is my eligibility affected by absence from the UK?

- 116 If you are a UK citizen who has spent an extended period living outside the UK, either for study or for employment, you will need to show that you have maintained a relevant connection with the UK and that your absence was temporary. 'Temporary' does not depend solely on the length of the absence.
- 117 A period of ordinary residence will not be treated as being interrupted by an absence that is caused by:
- your, your parents', your spouse's or your civil partner's temporary absence abroad for reasons of training or employment
 - your, your spouse's or your civil partner's temporary full-time education abroad.
- 118 If you are an expatriate, or the child (whether born in the UK or overseas) of an expatriate, and you appear to have returned to the UK solely for the purpose of full-time education, you will need to demonstrate that your absence was temporary. You will need to show that:
- the absence abroad was involuntary
 - attempts were made to remedy the breach with the UK at the earliest opportunity

¹ Taken from the Department of Education and Skills 'Hardship Fund Guidance 2003/04, Part 2, Annexes'.

- there was no individual intention to sever links with the UK
- links have been maintained or re-established through visits, or vacation work, and subsequent re-settlement in the UK.

119 Anyone who is resident in a country is normally subject to the residence and tax conditions of that country. A resident may or may not acquire other rights by virtue of living there, but birth or long-term residence does not automatically confer similar rights to citizens of that country. If you have opted for full citizenship of a country other than the UK, then it should be assumed that you will be ineligible for a full award.

Am I eligible to apply if I have Indefinite Leave to Remain?

120 If you have been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILTR) by the Home Office, you have been given the right to reside in the UK, and thus have settled status and may be eligible for a full award. ILTR is usually given to those who have already spent a period of time in the UK, and are planning to take up British Citizenship. If you have ILTR status, you must establish a relevant connection as set out in paragraph 111 of this Guide. **Please enclose documentary evidence of your status with your application, and ensure that your institution provides full details in Part III of the application form.**

Am I eligible for an award if I am a refugee, an asylum seeker or have Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELTR)?

121 If you have been granted full refugee status by the Home Office, or you are the child, spouse or civil partner of a refugee, you are eligible to apply for a full award, providing you have not ceased to be resident in the UK since being granted asylum or refugee status. **Please enclose documentary evidence (such as a letter from the Immigration and Nationality Department of the Home Office) of your status with your application, and ensure that your institution provides full details in Part III of the application form.**

122 If you are an 'asylum seeker', you are required to demonstrate settled status if you are to be eligible for an award.

123 If you have not been recognised by the Home Office as meeting the terms of the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees, you may be granted Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELTR) or Exceptional Leave to Enter (ELTE). In that case, you are eligible to apply for an award if you have spent the previous three years in the UK, providing that this has not been wholly or mainly for the purposes of full-time education. **Please enclose documentary evidence of your status with your application, and ensure that your institution provides full details in Part III of the application form.**

Am I eligible for an award as a migrant worker?

124 If you, your parents, your spouse or your civil partner are working in the UK as EU citizens with migrant worker status, you are eligible under Article 7 (2) and Article 12 of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1612/68 to apply for a full award including a maintenance grant. A migrant worker is an EU citizen who is employed in a member state of the EU who should be treated as a national of that member state.

125 The following conditions must be met:

- The employment must be full-time and of significant duration. Therefore, if you are engaged in part-time or short-term casual employment, or have been effectively unemployed, you cannot be considered to hold migrant worker

130 If you are ordinarily resident in the Isle of Man, you will not have established eligibility for an award through any period of residence in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland during which you were in full-time education.

131 If you are normally resident in the Channel Islands, you should be eligible for full award as the Channel Islands Education Authorities no longer provide funding for postgraduate studies. In order to be eligible for an AHRC award, you will need to meet the normal residency requirements (refer to paragraphs 110 and 111).

SCHEME ELIGIBILITY

Is my programme of study eligible?

132 You are eligible to apply for this scheme if you wish to undertake full-time or part-time doctoral study, leading to the award of a PhD or DPhil, and you are working on a research project within the AHRC's subject domain.

133 If you are an academic member of staff employed at the HEI at which you wish to study, you are not eligible to apply, unless you are paid on an hourly basis. In which case, you may be eligible for a part-time award.

Ineligible departments

134 Certain departments are ineligible to submit **doctoral** applications on behalf of students in 2008 because of their low doctoral submission rates in past years. The departments concerned are listed in the table below. Please note that unless otherwise indicated, this ineligibility applies only to the departments named below, and that other arts and humanities departments at these institutions will be eligible to submit applications on behalf of students for doctoral study in 2008.

Table 2 – Departments ineligible to submit applications for doctoral awards in 2008

Institution	Department or School
University of Cambridge	Department of Law
University of Edinburgh	Department of English Literature
University of Liverpool	School of Archaeology, Classics and Egyptology
Manchester Metropolitan University	All
Middlesex University	All
University of Oxford	Department of Classics
Royal Holloway	Department of Drama, Theatre and Media Studies
UCL	Department of History of Art
UCL	Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies

SECTION 6 - WHAT SUBJECTS ARE COVERED BY THIS SCHEME?

What subject areas does the AHRC support?

135 The institution through which you are applying for an award will be asked to specify which of the AHRC's eight subject panels should be responsible for assessing your application. Detailed guidance on the subjects covered by these panels, any specific points concerned with this Scheme, and overlaps with other award-making bodies are given below.

Can I apply to the AHRC and another Research Council?

136 The AHRC is one of several public bodies that provide awards for postgraduate study. Its schemes complement those of the other Research Councils, each of which is responsible for its own range of subject areas.

137 You are allowed to apply to only one of the Research Councils for support to pursue a specific course or programme of postgraduate study. It is your responsibility to find out to which body you should apply. The other Research Councils are listed in Appendix B. Please note that the AHRC cannot take responsibility for passing applications on to another Research Council, since Research Councils operate to different timetables, eligibility and recognition criteria.

138 Some programmes of study will include aspects of both the arts and humanities and the sciences or social sciences. If you intend to pursue such a programme, you should apply to the AHRC if the majority of the programme is in the arts and humanities. If the majority of the programme is in the social sciences, you should apply to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). There is a Joint Statement by the AHRC and ESRC that describes the boundary between their subject domains in more detail; this can be found on our website at: www.ahrc.ac.uk/about/subject_coverage/joint_ahrc_esrc_statement_on_subject_coverage.asp

139 For subjects such as archaeology, if the majority of options is of a scientific nature, you should apply to the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC).

What do I do if I am not sure that my programme of study is eligible?

140 If you are in any doubt about the eligibility of your proposed programme of study, please contact us for advice as soon as possible and **no later than 1 April 2008**. You should include a brief description of your research programme. We will try to resolve any such issues well before the closing date for submission of applications of 1 May 2008. Similarly, if you are in any doubt about which of the AHRC schemes covers your course or programme of study, you should contact the institution at which you intend to study in the first instance. If they cannot advise you, you should approach us for advice by **1 April 2008**.

141 We cannot guarantee that a response can be given to such queries if we do not receive a synopsis of your proposed study by 1 April. Your application may be deemed ineligible if it is submitted to the wrong body or for the wrong scheme. It is yours and your institution's responsibility to redirect your application to another funding body, if necessary.

142 If you, or the institution, are in correspondence with the AHRC regarding the eligibility status of your programme of study, resulting in our confirming that the programme is eligible, please include a copy of this correspondence with your application form. Owing to the very large volume of applications we

receive, it is impossible for us to match queries dealt with before the closing date to specific applications.

What is the AHRC's subject domain?

143 The AHRC will support work that seeks to improve, enhance or develop creativity, insights, knowledge and understanding in the artistic and creative activities, history, languages, literatures, and systems of thought and belief of human beings, both past and present. Within that broad definition, there are inevitable overlaps and border territories that are shared with other award-making bodies. We seek to specify where such overlaps are likely to occur in the guidance given below.

144 In general, we seek to be as liberal as possible in defining and interpreting the Council's domain, to an extent that is consistent with the protection of its core subject areas, i.e. areas that are solely supported by the Council. The Council will thus accept any application submitted to it that is eligible on other grounds, unless there are firm grounds for reaching the conclusion that the application falls wholly outside its domain. It will not reach such a decision on the grounds that another body could have accepted the application. The key factor is whether it would be an acceptable extension of the Council's domain for it to accept the application. Such decisions are reached on a case-by-case basis.

145 Many areas of study in the arts and humanities overlap with other disciplines, and some are inherently interdisciplinary. It is not possible to define what falls within or outside the arts and humanities by reference to the methodologies used or by simple reference to the subject matter of the study. Rather, the Council takes into account whether or not the following could plausibly be regarded as falling within our subject domain:

- the approach and methodologies to be adopted
- the research questions or problems to be addressed
- the wider context in which those questions or problems are located.

146 Please note that the AHRC does not fund courses in education, such as the PGCE.

How do subjects relate to panels?

147 The AHRC has eight peer review panels which assess all postgraduate applications. We operate on the general principle that it should be the responsibility of those submitting the application to determine to which panel or panels the application should most appropriately be directed. Only in exceptional cases, where there has been a clear misjudgement, will applications be directed to another panel, and then in consultation with those submitting the application. It should also be stressed that the panel to which an application is directed need not be determined by the title of the department or other unit within which you will undertake your work. Rather, you should be guided by the subject matter of the application itself. A project that is located in a language department, for example, might well be suitable for submission to the history panel.

How are interdisciplinary applications handled?

148 The panel structure is based on single disciplines that are, in some cases, grouped together. But it welcomes, and is committed to supporting, work that spans discipline boundaries. Wherever possible, postgraduate applications should be directed to a single panel but, where appropriate, you and your institutional authorities may indicate that you would like a second panel to be approached for a subsidiary assessment.

THE EIGHT SUBJECT PANELS

Panel 1: Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology

149 **Classics and ancient history** may include: the language, literature and thought (including ancient science and philosophy) of Greece and Rome from the earliest times to late antiquity; Latin language and literature of the middle ages and subsequent periods; the history, art and archaeology of Greece from the Mycenaean period to the Roman empire; the history, art and archaeology of Rome, Italy and the Roman provinces from the pre-Roman period to the late Roman empire; the language, literature, history, culture, art and archaeology of the Byzantine world; Latin and Greek philology and linguistics; the reception of classical antiquity and the classical tradition.

150 In addition, it should be noted that:

- applications for work in **medieval Latin** should normally be directed to this Panel
- applications in **ancient philosophy and religion** may also be directed to Panel 8 (*Philosophy, Religious Studies and Law*)
- applications in **other ancient languages**, such as Sumerian, should normally be directed to this Panel
- applications in **Byzantine studies** may be directed to this Panel, or to Panel 2 (*Visual Arts and Media: practice, history, theory*) or Panel 4 (*Medieval and Modern History*) or any combination of the three
- applications in **modern Greek** should be directed to Panel 5 (*Modern Languages and Linguistics*)
- applications in the **classical tradition and its reception** should normally be directed to this Panel, perhaps in association with another panel such as Panel 2 (*Visual Arts and Media: practice, history, theory*), Panel 3 (*English Language and Literature*) or Panel 4 (*Medieval and Modern History*).

151 **Archaeology** falls within the AHRC's subject domain and may include: archaeological theory; archaeology of human origins; prehistoric and historic societies on a world-wide basis. This includes early civilisations of near east; Egyptology; classical archaeology; medieval and post-medieval archaeology; colonial and industrial archaeology. Also included are landscape and environmental archaeology; public archaeology and archaeological aspects of heritage management and museum studies.

152 The Council shares responsibility for the funding of research in archaeology with the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), which supports primarily **science-based archaeology**. Where the focus of the work to be undertaken (in terms of the research questions or problems to be addressed, and the context for those questions, as well as the methodologies to be employed) is primarily archaeological, applications should be directed to the Council; and where it is scientific, they should more appropriately be directed to NERC.

153 The Council will use its discretion and does not seek to discourage applications on the borderline of the humanities and science side of archaeology, but projects must address research issues and problems of substantive archaeological significance. If a proposal focuses on an archaeological question (for example about trade, cultural history or identity) that can be answered with science, then it falls within the domain of the AHRC. The AHRC will not normally support projects that are mainly concerned with technical or scientific questions that have an application within archaeology.

- 154 Applications in ***cultural resource management*** should normally be directed to this panel where they have a clear archaeological base. Other applications may be more appropriately directed to other panels, such as Panel 2 (*Visual Arts and Media: practice, history, theory*), Panel 4 (*Medieval and Modern History*) or Panel 6 (*Librarianship, Information and Museum Studies*).

Panel 2: Visual Arts and Media: practice, history, theory

- 155 This Panel covers studies relating to contemporary practice, history or theory in art, design and media.
- 156 ***Art and design*** may include: painting, public art, social art practice/art in the public realm, sculpture, performance art, installation, time-based art, printmaking, photography, screen productions, virtual reality, multimedia, digital and interactive art and design, fine art digital media, software design for visual artefacts, animation, illustration, graphic and communication design, three-dimensional design, art and design in the landscape, interior and environmental design, theatre design, exhibition and events design, craft, applied arts, fashion, printed textiles, woven textiles, constructed textiles, knit, jewellery and metalwork, ceramics, glass, wood, metal, plastics, technology studies, automotive design, product design, furniture, art and design management, pedagogy in art and design, cultural, theoretical and historical studies (where this is principally contextual to contemporary practice and culture within art and design).
- 157 The Council will also support research in ***architecture*** that concerns building design (but not structural or civil or other aspects of engineering).
- 158 ***Arts management*** research will be supported where there is a clear focus on the requirements of the visual or media arts. (Support for such research may also be sought from the Arts Councils). Alternatively, where the focus is on arts management within music and the performing arts, applications may be more appropriately directed to Panel 7 (*Music and the Performing Arts*). You should also bear in mind that ESRC supports work on the socio-economic foundations and impact of the creative and cultural industries.
- 159 The Council may support courses in ***Arts therapy*** where the predominant focus of the study is based in the arts and humanities, rather than in medicine and psychology.
- 160 ***History of art, architecture and design*** may include: history of art, architecture, and design, in the widest chronological and geographical framework; theory and aesthetics of the visual arts; museology, museum studies, and conservation; history of film, photography, and visual media; work in cognate fields such as cultural and gender studies, archaeology, and anthropology, where these relate to, or are grouped with, study of the visual arts.
- 161 In addition, it should be noted that:
- applications in ***museology, curatorship and conservation*** should be directed to this Panel only where the focus is on curating visual arts exhibitions (i.e. curatorial practice). Other such applications should normally be directed to Panel 6 (*Librarianship, Information and Museum Studies*), except where the focus is archaeological, when they may be more appropriate for Panel 1 (*Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology*)
 - applications in some aspects of ***cultural geography*** may be appropriately directed to this Panel, covering matters such as the iconography and interpretation of the cultural landscape; cultural constructions of nature and environment; creative and imaginative aspects of geographical thought and practice, including the arts of mapping; relationships between space, place and cultural identity. In some cases, applications could be directed to Panel 4 (*Medieval and Modern History*).

- 162 The Council does not accept applications that are clearly anthropological in nature.
- 163 **Communication, cultural and media studies** constitutes an area of study for which the AHRC shares responsibility with ESRC. It includes: communication studies, including electronic communications; cultural studies; film studies; and media studies.
- 164 Study in these areas may fall within the domain of this Panel, particularly where the focus is practice-based and on images. Other applications may be appropriately addressed to Panel 3 (*English Language and Literature*), Panel 5 (*Modern Languages and Linguistics*) or Panel 7 (*Music and Performing Arts*). Where the focus of the proposed work is on social or economic issues, applications may be more appropriately addressed to ESRC.

Panel 3: English Language and Literature

- 165 English language and literature may include: Old and Middle English language and literature; Old Norse and Icelandic; Renaissance literature; 17th and 18th century literature; romantic literature; Victorian literature; 20th century literature; American literature; colonial and postcolonial literature; comparative literature; women's writing; creative writing; children's literature; critical and cultural theory and history; gender and gay studies; bibliography, textual criticism and history of the book; Irish literature in English; Scottish Literature in English and Scots; and Welsh Literature in English.
- 166 In addition, the following points should be noted:
- applications for studies in the history of the **English language**, and stylistic and discourse analysis should be directed to this Panel. Other English language studies, including studies of speech and pragmatics, lexis and grammar, may be directed to this Panel or to Panel 5 (*Modern Languages and Linguistics*)
 - applications in **critical theory and cultural or communications studies** may be appropriately directed to this Panel, especially where the focus of the study is on the interpretation or analysis of texts in English. You should also bear in mind that ESRC supports work in cultural and communication studies
 - applications in **creative writing** fall within the domain of this Panel at both doctoral and Master's level
 - applications in **publishing studies** fall within the domain of Panel 6 (*Librarianship, Information and Museum Studies*) rather than this Panel.

Panel 4: Medieval and Modern History

- 167 The AHRC shares responsibility with ESRC for the support of postgraduate work in history. The AHRC supports work in all periods of history from ancient times to the recent past, and in all parts of the world. Similarly ESRC has a funding interest in the social and economic history of all periods and in all parts of the world. Applications in ancient history should normally be directed to Panel 1 (*Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology*), all other applications to Panel 4. The AHRC is primarily responsible for: biography; administrative, cultural, diplomatic, legal, military, political and religious history; the history of science, of medicine, and of ideas; and historiography.
- 168 As a working definition, and for the purposes of eligibility for the Postgraduate Competition, the AHRC takes 'modern history' to end in the late twentieth century. It does, of course, recognise that 'contemporary history' is a valid field of study. However, applicants whose study focuses primarily or exclusively on the last two decades of that century will need to show in their proposal how and

why their focus is indeed predominantly historical (rather than contemporary, cultural or political etc) for example, how the study will focus on change over a defined period of time or will make predominant use of historical modes of analysis. Applicants should note that proposals which focus on contemporary or near-contemporary political theory or analysis or on economic or geographical themes should normally be directed to ESRC, since these studies form part of its remit. Proposals which focus exclusively or predominantly on the early twenty-first century will not normally be admissible.

169 In addition it should be noted that:

- applications in **historical or cultural geography** that fall within the Council's domain (see under Panel 2) and in the **history of geography** should be directed to this Panel, where there is a demonstrable historical focus
- applications in the **history of science and medicine** and in the **history of ideas** should be directed to this Panel, except in those cases where the philosophical focus of the proposed study is so dominant that it would be more appropriate to direct it to Panel 8 (*Philosophy, Religious Studies and Law*)
- applications in **area studies** might be appropriately directed to this Panel, where the main focus of the proposed work is historical, or to this Panel, along with another one, when there is a historical component to it. You should be aware that ESRC supports work in area studies
- while the Council supports work in diplomatic history and the history of international relations, applications in **contemporary or near-contemporary international relations** (see chronological definitions given above) or **contemporary or near-contemporary political theory or analysis** should normally be directed to ESRC
- some applications in **communication, cultural and media studies** might be directed appropriately to this Panel, perhaps in association with other panels, such as Panel 2 (*Visual Arts and Media: practice, history, theory*); Panel 3 (*English Language and Literature*); or Panel 5 (*Modern Languages and Linguistics*).

Panel 5: Modern Languages and Linguistics

170 This Panel covers areas of work within the following subject areas: Middle Eastern and African studies; Asian studies; European studies; Celtic studies; French; German, Dutch and Scandinavian languages; Italian; Russian, Slavonic and East European languages; Iberian and Latin American languages; and linguistics.

171 The work to be undertaken may include studies in: language and literature; critical and cultural theory; creative writing; cultural studies; gender studies; media studies; philosophy; and historical studies.

172 **All applications to this Panel must include a significant proportion of work on texts, documents or archives or fieldwork in a language other than English;** they must also demonstrate competence in that language at an appropriate level. In social, political, cultural and historical studies there are overlaps with the responsibilities of ESRC. Other points to note:

- Applications in **communication, cultural, media and gender studies** may fall within the Council's domain, especially where the focus of the proposed study is on the study of texts or images, but you should bear in mind that ESRC also supports work in communication, cultural, media and gender studies. Many applications in these areas of study that fall within the Council's domain may also be directed to other panels, such as Panel 2

(*Visual Arts and Media: practice, history, theory*), Panel 4 (*Medieval and Modern History*), and Panel 7 (*Music and Performing Arts*)

- Applications in **area studies** will generally fall within the Council's domain where the focus of the proposed study is on artistic or creative activities, history, languages, literatures, or thoughts and beliefs, but you should bear in mind that ESRC also supports work in area studies and work on, for example, economics or politics, should be directed to ESRC. Many area studies applications that fall within the Council's domain may also be directed to other panels (including 2, 4 and 7)
- Applications in **modern Greek** studies will be treated as falling within this Panel's domain
- Applications to undertake Master's-level courses in **interpreting and translation** should be made to this Panel. Interpreting and translation courses that are aimed at students wishing to pursue a career in the business and commercial sectors, rather than the arts and humanities, do not fall within the Council's subject domain.

173 **Linguistics.** The AHRC shares with ESRC responsibility for the support of research in linguistics. The AHRC focuses on support where research questions bear on the structure, history, theory, description and application of language and languages, including pragmatics and corpus studies, along with such matters as translation and lexicography. Applications for such studies of the English language may be directed to this Panel or to Panel 3 (*English Language and Literature*). All studies of the history of English, stylistics or discourse and analysis should be directed to Panel 3. ESRC focuses on support for areas of applied linguistics, computational linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and interdisciplinary social science research involving linguistics.

Panel 6: Librarianship, Information and Museum Studies

- 174 Applications for doctoral research and Master's level courses in librarianship, record and archive studies, and information science fall within the domain of this Panel. This Panel covers subjects including: information communities and the use and management of information in all forms and in all contexts; all aspects of archive administration and records management; all aspects of information policy in the information society; information systems; systems thinking; systems development; information retrieval (including interfaces and gateways); preservation and conservation of recorded information; and the information industry, including publishing and journalism.
- 175 The Council *does not* support courses in Computer Science, as such courses focus on engineering and mathematics; these are areas which do not fall within the Council's subject domain.
- 176 **Journalism:** the Council supports all forms of journalism (such as broadcast journalism, newspaper journalism, periodical journalism), and includes journalism transmitted through new media (multimedia and online journalism).
- 177 Applications from those intending to pursue Master's-level courses, and doctoral research in **publishing studies** will also be accepted as falling within the domain of this Panel.
- 178 Most applications in **museum studies, curatorship and conservation** should be directed to this Panel. Where the focus is archaeological, they may be more appropriate for Panel 1 (*Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology*); where the focus is on curating visual arts exhibitions, they may be more appropriate for Panel 2 (*Visual Arts or Media: practice, history, theory*). Alternatively, in some cases, Panel 4 (*Medieval and Modern History*) may be the most appropriate panel.

Panel 7: Music and Performing Arts

179 **Music** may include: composition and performance (including classical, commercial and popular); history and criticism of music; ethnomusicology; theory and analysis, including empirical approaches; technology and computer applications (in doctoral research in these areas, digital and electronic outcomes as well as a written thesis may be possible).

180 The following points should be especially noted:

- both **Master's-level** courses and **doctoral** research in **composition** are eligible for funding. Practice-based courses may fall in either the Professional Preparation Master's Scheme or the Research Preparation Master's Scheme depending on the aims and focus of the course and the student's pathway
- both **Master's-level** courses and **doctoral** research in **performance** are eligible for funding. Practice-based courses may fall in either the Professional Preparation Master's Scheme or the Research Preparation Master's Scheme depending on the aims and focus of the course and the student's pathway.
- responsibility for **ethnomusicology** is shared with ESRC.

181 The Council may support courses in music psychology where the predominant focus of the study is based in the arts and humanities.

182 **Drama, dance and performing arts** may include: drama, theatre, dance and performance analysis; drama, theatre, dance and performance history; drama, theatre, dance and performance practice; film, TV and video analysis; film, TV and video practice; dramaturgy and theatre translation; gender and performance; scenography; new technologies and performance; theatre performance; performance documentation and reconstruction; live art; choreography; dance education and health; community performance; performance anthropology; drama and dance/movement therapies; and related specialist areas.

183 It should also be noted that:

- Practice-based courses may fall in either the Professional Preparation Master's Scheme or the Research Preparation Master's Scheme depending on the aims and focus of the course and the student's pathway
- **Dance ethnography** (including dance anthropology, ethnochoreology, and performance studies which adopt fieldwork techniques) does fall within our domain but responsibility for **dance ethnography** and **theatre anthropology** is shared with ESRC.

Panel 8: Philosophy, Religious Studies and Law

184 **Philosophy** may include all the main areas, styles of and approaches to philosophy including: history of philosophy including ancient, medieval, modern and recent; metaphysics; epistemology; logic; philosophy of science; philosophy of mind; philosophy of language; philosophy of religion; 19th and 20th century European philosophy including phenomenology, existentialism, critical theory, hermeneutics and deconstruction; ethics including applied ethics; political and social philosophy; applied philosophy; feminist philosophy; and aesthetics.

185 In addition, the following points should be noted:

- applications in **ancient philosophy** may be directed appropriately either to this Panel or to Panel 1 (*Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology*), or both

- applications in the **history of science** and the **history of ideas** should normally be directed to Panel 4 (*Medieval and Modern History*)
 - some applications in **aesthetics** may be directed also to Panel 2 (*Visual Arts and Media: practice, history, theory*)
 - where the focus of the study is on empirical surveys of current **political practice**, rather than philosophy, the application should be directed to ESRC
 - applications in **contemporary politics and political theory** should also be directed to ESRC.
- 186 **Religious studies** may include the study of the world's religions, specific or comparative, including their scriptures, thought, history, ethical teaching, social and cultural impact, practices and related areas. It embraces theological, textual, philosophical, sociological, anthropological and applied approaches. It includes all of the areas normally studied under the rubric of theology, divinity, religious studies or biblical studies.
- 187 **Law** may include doctrinal, theoretical, empirical, comparative or other studies of law and legal phenomena. The AHRC has a particular responsibility for studies where the focus is on the content or procedures of the law. It shares responsibility for studies in law with ESRC, which has particular responsibility for work in socio-legal studies and on the socio-economic impact of the law. It should also be noted that the Council does not provide support in any competition for postgraduate students undertaking conversion courses in law, or for courses that aim to provide them with training for legal practice (for example, courses such as the CPE, LPC and BVC are not eligible for funding).

RING-FENCED SUBJECT AREAS

- 188 Between 2004 -2006 the AHRC ran a Ring-Fenced Scheme where five subject areas were deemed to merit strategic support. The five subject areas selected for ring-fencing were: Ancient and Medieval materials and artefacts; Early languages of the British Isles and their literatures; East and Central European and Balkan studies: literatures, history, culture and languages; History of architecture and the built environment; and Linguistics of major European languages. The AHRC ring-fenced up to six awards a year in each of these five areas. **It has been agreed that the ring fencing scheme will no longer run.**

SECTION 7 – ABOUT THE AHRC'S POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

WHAT IS THE FINANCIAL BASIS OF AWARDS?

- 189 A **full postgraduate award** for full-time study provides funds to meet:
- payment of approved fees to the institution and college fees, if appropriate
 - a maintenance grant, plus additional allowances for disabled students, where appropriate
 - additional support towards the costs of fieldwork or study visits for students pursuing doctoral research or research-based Master's courses.
- 190 The rates of award given below relate to the academic year 2007-08. Rates for the academic year 2008-09 will be published separately, and made available to all award holders in the *Guide for Postgraduate Award Holders*. The current guide is available on the AHRC's website (www.ahrc.ac.uk).
- 191 We also provide **fees-only** awards for eligible EU students. 'Fees-only' award holders are not eligible to receive a maintenance grant, but may be eligible for additional support towards the costs of fieldwork or study visits and for disabled students' allowances.
- 192 Awards for students who are studying on a **part-time** basis include:
- Payment of approved fees to the institution and college fees, if appropriate
 - a maintenance grant up to a maximum of 60% of the equivalent of a full-time award, plus additional allowances for disabled students, where appropriate
 - you may also be entitled to additional support towards the costs of fieldwork or study visits.
- 193 **In 2007 the AHRC changed its finance processes relating to the payment of maintenance and fees. We now make all payments directly to your institution's finance office. You will need to make arrangements with them about how to receive the money.**

Will you pay my tuition fees?

- 194 The AHRC will pay tuition fees to cover tuition and registration, up to a maximum of £3,240. This is the maximum rate set by the Research Councils collectively. For part-time award holders, the maximum fee level is £1,620. Fees are paid directly to the institution in two instalments each academic year.
- 195 The AHRC will also pay postgraduate college fees for the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, as agreed by the Research Councils.
- 196 Approved fees do not include the costs of residence, which you must pay out of your maintenance grant. No separate payment will be made towards fees for any examination, caution money, or any deposit ultimately repayable to you. Nor will we pay charges for typing or binding a thesis or any fees incurred for training courses.

How much is the maintenance grant?

- 197 The AHRC, like other the Research Councils, followed the recommendations of Sir Gareth Roberts' review, 'SET for Success (The supply of people with science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills, April 2002)', in raising doctoral stipends outside London to £9,000 in 2003-04, £10,500 in 2004-05, to £12,000 in 2005-06 and £12,300 in 2006-07. Those studying at an HEI in London receive an additional £2,000.
- 198 In 2007-08, the basic rates of maintenance grant for a full-time course lasting at least one year are as follows:
- if you are attending an institution within the City of London or the Metropolitan Police District £14,600
 - if you are attending any other institution £12,600
- 199 Awards are renewed on an annual basis, subject to satisfactory progress. If the award is for a period of less than 12 months in any year, your grant will be reduced pro-rata to reflect the number of days for which you will be fully registered.
- 200 If you receive a part-time doctoral award, the AHRC will pay a maintenance grant up to a maximum of 60% of a full-time award per academic year to be used for the support of your research. Please note that the amount of maintenance grant a part-time award holder will receive each year will depend in the length of their award.

What is the Research Training Fund?

- 201 Research Training Funds of £850 will be paid to your institutional authorities in December. The funding is provided to help institutions develop and enhance their research training provision for all AHRC-funded doctoral students. The fund is paid annually for all doctoral award holders. We will make a maximum of four payments in relation to any one award holder. For award holders who are registered for more than four years, the institution will receive funds in the first four years of their award only.

Do you provide any additional allowances and grants?

- 202 If you hold an award for full-time study, you may be eligible for certain additional funding, as follows:
- Disabled Students' Allowance – if you have a long-term disability and as a result of your disability you are obliged to incur additional expenditure in connection with your studies, you may be eligible for an extra allowance. This may cover costs relating to additional daily expenses, equipment, or non-medical help. We will consider meeting only those costs that are incurred directly and solely as a consequence of your taking up an AHRC award to pursue postgraduate study. This allowance is available to all award holders, full-time, part-time and fees-only.
 - Contributions toward fieldwork costs and study visits:
 - UK study visits (an unlimited number during your award)
 - Overseas study visits (one during your award)
 - Overseas conferences (one during your award).These allowances may be available to those with a part-time award.
- 203 Full details of this support are available in the *Guide for Postgraduate Award Holders* on the AHRC's website (www.ahrc.ac.uk).

Do I need to pay income tax?

- 204 Grants payable under an AHRC award are not regarded as income for tax purposes and the AHRC is not deemed to be the employer of an award-holder. For information about your position regarding tax and National Insurance, please see the Inland Revenue's guidance on Income Tax and Students available on the HR Revenue and Customs website (www.hmrc.gov.uk/students/index.shtml).

Can I hold other grants?

- 205 AHRC awards are not means-tested and financial need is not a factor in the assessment process. It is not permissible to hold two awards concurrently that are intended for the same purpose, though it may be possible for you to hold additional bursaries or grants where these are intended to supplement your AHRC award. If you are, or will be, in receipt of an additional grant, you should contact the AHRC for further advice.
- 206 It is not normally permissible for full-time award holders to undertake paid work amounting to more than six hours per week.

SECTION 8 - HOW TO APPLY FOR FUNDING

What is the application process?

- 207 You should submit an application to the AHRC on the appropriate form. Forms are available to download from our website (see below for details).
- 208 You must submit an application through the Higher Education Institution (HEI) at which you intend to study. You cannot apply directly to the AHRC.
- 209 You may submit **only one** application to the AHRC each year. If you submit more than one application, you may be disqualified from the AHRC's postgraduate competition for that year.
- 210 The deadline for applications to reach the AHRC is **1 May 2008**. **Your application must reach the AHRC by 5.00 on 1 May**.
- 211 **We are unable to accept applications that arrive late. Applications that are sent by fax or e-mail, applications that are incomplete, or are on an incorrect or out-of-date form, will not be accepted.**
- 212 You should be aware that we have introduced a cap on the number of applications an institution can submit in this year's competition. You will need to contact your institution at an early stage to ask about this process and how this will affect your application.
- 213 Many institutions have internal deadlines by which the form needs to reach their Graduate Studies Office or equivalent. These deadlines may be several weeks before 1 May. **It is vital that you check your institution's own timetable for submission of AHRC applications** and that you allow yourself, your referees and your institution sufficient time to complete the form and forward it to the AHRC. If time is short, you may ask your referees and your institution to complete their parts of the form at the same time. You should be aware, however, that this may disadvantage your application since the referees' comments should build on your comments and, in completing their section, the institution should refer to both Parts I and II.
- 214 Whilst the form is submitted to the AHRC by the HEI at which you intend to study, **it is your responsibility to ensure that all parties have completed the relevant sections of the form in time for it to reach the AHRC by the closing date**. We have included a timetable checklist with the application form which you may wish use to plan and track the progress of your application.

How do I get an application form?

- 215 The Doctoral Awards Scheme application forms and *Notes for completing the application form for a doctoral award* are available from the AHRC's website (www.ahrc.ac.uk). It is essential that you read the guidance notes carefully before completing the form. The form comprises three sections. You complete Part I of the form, your referees complete Part II, and the institution at which you intend to study completes Part III. It is essential that your referees and the institutional authorities also read the guidance notes as their comments are vital for your application.
- 216 Please download the **relevant application form**. There is a different application form for each scheme, so you need to be sure you download and complete the correct form. All the forms and guidance notes have been revised for this year so you must use this year's forms. We are unable to accept

applications submitted on the wrong form. Application forms are only available in electronic form and must be word-processed or typed. We are unable to provide hard copies of the forms. Please contact your HEI if you have problems with downloading and completing the form.

- 217 You will also need to download the **Degree Results (DR) form**. If you completed your undergraduate degree at an overseas HEI, you will need to download the **Degree Results (DR(Overseas)) form**. All students must ensure that a DR form, providing information about their undergraduate degree, is submitted on their behalf.
- 218 If you have a Master's degree or equivalent or are currently studying for a Master's degree, you will need to download the **Postgraduate Report (PR) form**. This needs to be completed by the institution at which you completed, or are completing, your Master's degree. If you are studying for, or completed, your Master's degree at an overseas institution, the UK institution at which you will be studying should complete the PR form.

What is the closing date for applications?

- 219 Your completed application form must reach the AHRC by **5.00pm on 1 May 2008**. We will not accept applications received after this date. This is the closing date for **all** applications regardless of when you complete(d) your undergraduate or postgraduate qualifications. To ensure that your application is delivered on time and is track and traceable, we strongly suggest that it is sent to us by courier or by registered post. A postmark of 1 May or before is not sufficient grounds for us to accept the application if it arrives after the deadline
- 220 You must complete Part I of the application form yourself, then forward the entire form to your first referee. We recommend that you also forward a copy of the *Notes for completing the application form for a doctoral award*. The first referee will pass it to the second referee. The referees will complete Part II of the form. The second referee will forward the entire form and *Notes* to the institution at which you intend to study. The Head of Department, or equivalent, and the Registry staff will complete Part III of the form. The Registry will then send the form to the AHRC on your behalf.

When do I need to provide confirmation of my degree results?

Undergraduate degree results form

- 221 If you have taken your undergraduate degree at a UK institution, you also need to download a Degree Results form for your undergraduate qualifications.

Pre-2008 Graduates

If you have already completed your degree at a UK institution, you should complete the relevant parts of this form yourself and then forward it to the institution where you undertook the qualification. The institution should complete it, sign and stamp it and forward it to your proposed institution. The form will be attached as part of the application form and should be received along with your application form by 1 May 2008. **You should note that without this form your application will be considered incomplete and will be made ineligible.** It is your responsibility, along with your proposed institution, to ensure that this form is completed and attached to your application form.

2008 Graduates

If you are completing your degree at a UK institution but you will not complete your degree until 2008, you should download the DR form and complete your sections. This should be forwarded to the institution where you undertook the qualification. The institution should complete it, sign and stamp it and forward it to your proposed institution. The institution will then scan the DR form and send it to us by e-mail to drprforms@ahrc.ac.uk. This form should be sent as soon as possible, but should arrive no later than **11 July 2008**. **If the form has not been received by the relevant deadline, the application cannot be processed further and will be withdrawn from the Competition. The closing date for your application is 1 May, even if you do not graduate until 2008: the submission date of 11 July applies to the DR form only.**

- 222 If you completed your degree some years ago, it is possible that the institution which awarded your degree will not have a record of your degree results. Please check with the institution first. If this is the case, you should send them a copy of your degree certificate and ask them to note on the DR form that no details of your degree are available, but that they have seen an official record of your results. They should then send the DR form to the institution at which you plan to study so that they can attach it to the application form for submission by the 1 May deadline.
- 223 **It is your responsibility to ensure that the DR form is submitted to your proposed institution and then to AHRC in due time. We will not chase any outstanding forms. If the DR form has not been received by the relevant deadline, the application cannot be processed further and will be withdrawn from the Competition.**
- 224 If you have taken your undergraduate degree at an institution outside the UK, you must ask the UK institution at which you intend to study to complete the **DR(Overseas) form**. To enable the institution to complete the form, you must provide them with a transcript of your marks and, if you have completed your degree, a copy of your degree certificate. It would also be helpful if you or your overseas institution could provide an explanation of the marking system used by your institution and an indication of your position within the cohort (i.e. your position amongst the other students on the same course, in the same year).
- 225 If you have already completed your degree, the DR(Overseas) form should be attached to your application and sent with it to the AHRC for the closing date of **1 May**. If you will not complete your degree until 2008, the form should be sent to us by e-mail using the address: drprforms@ahrc.ac.uk as soon as possible, but no later than **11 July**. **The closing date for your application is 1 May, even if you don't graduate until 2008: the submission date of 11 July applies to the DR(Overseas) form only.**
- 226 **It is your responsibility to ensure that the DR(Overseas) form is submitted to your proposed institution and then to the AHRC in due time. We will not chase any outstanding forms. If the form has not been received by the relevant deadline, the application cannot be processed further and will be withdrawn from the Competition.**

Postgraduate report form

- 227 If you have completed, or are currently completing, a Master's or similar course, you must submit a **PR form**. The institution at which you took your Master's course should complete the form.
- 228 If your Master's study was at an overseas institution, you should ask the UK institution at which you intend to study to complete the PR form. To enable the

institution to complete the form, you must provide them with a transcript of your marks and, if you have completed your degree, a copy of your degree certificate. It would also be helpful if you or your overseas institution could provide an explanation of the marking system used by your institution and an indication of your position within the cohort.

229 Pre-2008 Graduates

If you have already completed your degree, you should complete the relevant parts of this form yourself and then forward it to the institution where you undertook the qualification (unless your Master's study was at an overseas institution - see paragraph 228). The institution should complete it, sign and stamp it, and forward it to your proposed institution. The form will be attached as part of the application form and should be received along with your application form by 1 May 2008. **It is your responsibility to ensure that the PR form is submitted to your proposed institution and then to the AHRC in due time. We will not chase any outstanding forms. If the form has not been received by the relevant deadline, the application cannot be processed further and will be withdrawn from the Competition**

2008 Graduates

If you are completing your postgraduate study at present but you will not complete your degree until 2008, you should download the PR form and complete your sections. This should be forwarded to the institution where you undertook the qualification. The institution should complete it, sign and stamp it and forward it to your proposed institution. The institution will then scan the PR form and send the it to us by e-mail to: drprforms@ahrc.ac.uk. This form should be sent as soon as possible, but no later than **6 June 2008**. **The closing date for your application is 1 May 2008, even if you do not graduate until 2008: the submission date of 6 June 2008 applies to the PR form only.**

230 It is your responsibility to ensure that the PR form is submitted to your proposed institution and then to the AHRC in due time. We will not chase any outstanding forms. If the form has not been received by the relevant deadline, the application cannot be processed further and will be withdrawn from the Competition.

231 The AHRC will no longer accept or consider supplementary PR reports.

232 **It is your responsibility to ensure that the PR form is submitted to your proposed institution and to the AHRC in due time. We will not chase any outstanding forms. If the form has not been received by the relevant deadline, the application cannot be processed further and will be withdrawn from the Competition.**

233 If you have commenced your doctoral study, you should choose your supervisor as one of your referees. He or she should include in their report an assessment of the progress you have made in your doctoral study. You should also ensure that you include details of your current research in your case for support.

How do I complete the application form?

234 There are detailed guidance notes for completing the form that should be downloaded with the application form. You, your referees and your institution need to read these carefully before filling in the form. There are additional notes for completing the DR and PR forms, these should be downloaded and read carefully. There is a summary timetable at Appendix C, which you are advised to keep to hand, to ensure that all deadlines are met.

Can I also apply for a studentship attached to a research grant?

235 Funding for doctoral research is also available through the AHRC's Research Grants scheme administered by our Research Division. You may be nominated for a research studentship to be attached to a Research Grant award for which your prospective supervisor has applied. You may apply through your supervisor for a Research Grant studentship and at the same time submit an application for a doctoral award in the postgraduate competition. You should keep Postgraduate Programmes informed of the progress of any such application. If you are offered both a Research Grant studentship and a postgraduate doctoral award, you will be asked to accept one and decline the other, since you may not hold two such awards concurrently.

Can I also apply for an award through the Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme (CDA)?

236 Awards for doctoral study may be offered by the HEI or the collaborating organisation under the Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme as described in paragraph 37. You may be nominated for a CDA studentship and at the same time you may submit an application in the postgraduate competition. If you are offered a studentship through the open competition and through the CDA scheme, you will be asked to accept one and decline the other, since you may not hold two such awards concurrently.

Can I also apply for a studentship attached to the Language Based Area Studies centres?

237 Awards for doctoral study may be offered by the five research centres for the Language Based Area Studies described in paragraph 38. You may be nominated for a studentship through these centres and at the same time you may submit an application in the postgraduate competition. You should keep Postgraduate Programmes informed of the progress of your nomination. If you are offered a studentship through the open competition and through the Language Based Area Studies centres, you will be asked to accept one and decline the other, since you may not hold two such awards concurrently.

What if I decide not to pursue my studies?

238 If you no longer wish to undertake your doctoral studies, you will need to withdraw your application. You will need to inform us of your decision in writing, by letter or e-mail. It is your responsibility to inform us of the withdrawal. You should not expect your institution to do this for you.

SECTION 9 - ASSESSING THE APPLICATIONS

Who will assess my application and on what basis?

- 239 The AHRC appoints assessors (through a nomination process) from among senior academic staff in Higher Education Institutions across the UK. They operate in eight subject panels. Details of panel membership are available on our website. Your application will be assessed by one of these subject panels. Your institution will be asked to indicate on the application form which panel should assess your application. If the interdisciplinary nature of the study means it would be more appropriate for two panels to assess your application, there is space on the application form to indicate this.
- 240 The panel agrees a grade for each application that reflects their assessment of the entire application, including the information and evidence provided about the student's ability, aptitude, commitment and preparedness for postgraduate research, the quality of the work the applicant will produce, and the quality of the training and support provided by the department and the institution. Each application is judged on its own merits, taking into account the following criteria:
- Evidence of the quality of the applicant: this will be based on the case made by the applicant in support of his/her application, and evidence provided by the referees and institutions about the applicant's performance at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and in terms of any relevant professional experience. It is important to note that by performance we do not mean only the final degree results but also any marks received to date. These should be available in the referees' report and in the institutional statement where appropriate. The assessors are looking for evidence of an ability to articulate a research project, a coherent and well thought-out plan for doctoral study, and a good awareness of the place of his/her research within the current field.
 - Evidence that the applicant is well-prepared for his/her proposed study and future career: this will be based on the applicant's description of how his/her previous experience (academic and professional) has prepared him/her for postgraduate study, and the applicant's description of how the programme of study will contribute to his/her long-term career aims. The assessors will also consider the supporting evidence provided by the referees and the institution, particularly in terms of the applicant's ability to complete the programme of study.
 - Evidence of the quality and feasibility of the proposed study: this will be based on the applicant's account of and reasons for pursuing the proposed programme of study. The assessors will also consider the supporting information provided by the institution about the programme of study and how it relates to the applicant's current and long-term goals.
 - Evidence of the quality and appropriateness of HEI support and resources: this will be based on the institution's and department's account of the preparation and training that will be provided to meet the applicant's needs, in terms of his/her doctoral study and future career. The assessors will consider information provided on the resources and support provided for the student that will enable him/her to successfully pursue his/her studies and complete a high quality thesis. They will also look for evidence that there is appropriate research expertise within the department, in particular, that the supervisor(s) expertise is relevant to the student's proposed study. Assessors will also be interested in seeing that appropriate procedures and

processes have been put in place in relation to research ethics, health and safety and misconduct.

241 **Whilst we ask for information on your undergraduate and postgraduate performance, academic performance is only one of the factors that the assessors take into account.** The majority of applicants have a first class degree and performed to a high level in their Master's study. A very high quality undergraduate or postgraduate qualification will not guarantee you an award. Conversely, if you performed less well at undergraduate level, you may still gain an award if you demonstrate strength in the other areas listed above.

242 The grading scheme is as follows:

Grade	Definition
1	Exceptional application, top priority for an award
2	Excellent application, very high priority for an award
3	Excellent application, high priority for an award
4	Good application, priority for an award
5	Satisfactory application, but not a priority
6	Poor application, not recommended for an award
7A	Application not recommended for an award because of inadequate preparation
7B	Application ungraded because it does not fall within the AHRC subject domain
7C	Application ungraded because it does not fall within the scope of the scheme

243 The panel will agree a grade for your application and separate marks for your undergraduate and postgraduate performance (according to the information provided in the DR and PR forms). When all the applications in the subject area have been graded, the applications are placed in rank order according to the assessors' grade, then, the postgraduate mark and finally, the undergraduate mark. Once all the panels have met to determine their grades, the Postgraduate Committee meets to approve recommendations for the allocation of awards in each subject and scheme on the basis of the number of awards available within each panel area and the agreed grades.

244 If you are unsuccessful, you will be informed of the grade assigned to your application. The AHRC is unable to provide feedback on any individual applications. In broad terms, a given grade will mean the same across all disciplines and panels. The distribution of grades will vary because the quality of applications is not equally distributed across panels.

245 It is important that all who are involved in completing the application form do their best to provide as full and complete evidence as possible to enable the assessors to make a fair judgement.

246 The referees' reports, institutional statements and degree results and report forms are an integral and important part of each application. Referees and institutional authorities involved in an application should address the questions asked of them as fully and as honestly as possible, commenting in detail on the applicant's recent work and his/her preparedness for the proposed course of study. **Failure by the referees and/or institutional authorities to meet this requirement will jeopardise the chances of even the strongest candidate.**

247 Those involved in completing the application form may find it helpful to read the conveners' reports on the 2007 competition, which will be available on our

website in early 2008. These reports provide feedback from the panels and provide some helpful directions as to what constitutes a good application.

- 248 Under no circumstances should candidates or their sponsors contact any assessor about an application. Any attempt to do so will disqualify you from the Competition.

Disclosure of information

- 249 Information about your application and degree results will be made available to the AHRC's postgraduate assessors. The results of your application will be disclosed to the institution at which you plan to study.

What does the AHRC do with information about my application and award?

- 250 The AHRC will retain information relating to your application and (if you are successful) your award both electronically and in paper form, for the course of your award, and for a minimum of seven years after its end. The Council will keep paper copies of unsuccessful applications for one year from the closing date of the Competition. After this, they will be destroyed. Personal information is used to process and monitor your application and award (including both academic and financial monitoring). This includes:

- operation of the AHRC grants processing and management information systems
- the acquisition of HEI and referee comments
- the preparation of material for use by peer review panels
- statistical analysis and surveys to inform the evaluation of the quality of the postgraduate study undertaken and to study demographic trends
- policy and strategy studies
- monitoring the progress of or changes to postgraduate study as necessary
- monitoring the spend of funds awarded.

- 251 The AHRC will treat as confidential all confidential information provided by you and will not use it or disclose it to any other person except as set out here. If you are successful, we will pass your contact details on to two schemes funded by the AHRC and Research Councils – the UKGRAD Programme and the Researchers in Residence Scheme – in order that they can keep you informed of the opportunities they offer. We will ask you to inform us if you do not wish us to pass on your contact details.

- 252 The Council will not pass award holder details to any commercial organisations, but may use them for future contact with you and when requesting information from higher education institutions to monitor progress and completion.

- 253 If you are successful, details of your award, including your name, the institution at which you are studying, the dates and type of award, the funding provided by the AHRC and a description of your subject of study, may be published on our website and in other AHRC publications. If you do not wish your details to be made public please contact Postgraduate Programmes to request privacy.

- 254 Award holders must provide, on request, a description of their work that may be included in any of the Council's publications, such as its Annual Report.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

- 255 The AHRC is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This means that it has a duty to provide information on request unless that information falls within certain exemptions that are specified in the Act. These exemptions apply to, among other things:
- personal information (which is dealt with under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998)
 - information that has been provided in confidence and which remains confidential, and
 - information which is a trade secret or where its release would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person.
- 256 If the AHRC receives a request under the Act that includes release of information contained in your application or in any reports on the progress of your award (including the final report) the AHRC will make every effort to consult with you before releasing that information to help it to decide whether or not one of the exemptions applies. However, the AHRC has a duty to comply with the Freedom of Information Act and will have to disclose the information requested unless it is satisfied that a relevant exemption applies.

Research Councils' Equal Opportunities Statement

- 257 The UK Research Councils are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations across and between the defined equalities groups in all of their relevant functions.
- 258 Accordingly, no eligible job applicant, funding applicant, employee or external stakeholder including members of the public should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of: gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins, religion or similar philosophical belief, spent criminal conviction, age or disability.
- 259 Any queries relating to this statement should be directed to staff in Human Resources within the appropriate Research Council

Research ethics, Health and Safety and Misconduct

- 260 The AHRC attaches considerable importance to the maintenance of high ethical standards in the development, conduct and reporting of the research and training it supports and to ensure that it is conducted in a professional manner and will not give rise to distress or annoyance to individuals.
- 261 It is the responsibility of your institution to ensure that your research is organised and undertaken within a framework of best practice and the Research Councils expect research to be conducted in accordance with the highest standards of integrity and research methodology. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants, tissue or data in research, the use of animals, research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.
- 262 The institution is responsible for ensuring a safe working environment is provided for all individuals associated with a research project. Its approach

and policy on health and safety matters must meet all regulatory and legislative requirements.

- 263 The institution must ensure that there are reliable systems and processes in place for the prevention of research misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, falsification of data), together with well-defined and clearly publicised arrangements for investigating allegations of misconduct.
- 264 The AHRC expects that both applicant and institution consider these issues when submitting an application form.

SECTION 10 - RESULTS OF THE COMPETITION

How will I know whether my application has reached the AHRC in time?

- 265 Please attach a stamped, self-addressed postcard to your application form. We will return this to you in May, once we have received your application. If you do not include a postcard, you will not receive acknowledgement that your application has arrived. **May is an extremely busy month for the Office, so we are unable to tell you by telephone or e-mail whether or not your application has arrived.** If you have not received your postcard by the end of May, we advise you to check with your institution to ensure that the application was sent to us in good time. Please note that this postcard only confirms that your application form has been received by the deadline. It does not confirm the application is complete or that it is eligible.
- 266 At Appendix D, there is a timetable showing what happens to your application after 1 May.

How will I know whether my DR form has reached the AHRC in time?

- 267 **If you completed your first degree prior to 2008**, your DR form should have been submitted alongside your application form by your chosen institution. You should contact your institution to confirm that the DR form was attached to the application and submitted in good time to reach the AHRC by **1 May** deadline. Please note that if you attached a stamped self-addressed postcard this only confirms that your application has been received, not that it is complete and eligible. The postcard is not confirmation that the DR was attached to the application. **May is an extremely busy time in the office so you should not contact the AHRC to confirm receipt of the DR form during this month.**
- 268 **If you will not complete your first degree until 2008**, you should contact your chosen institution to confirm that the DR was submitted via email in good time for the **11 July** deadline. If you require further confirmation that your DR form has been received by the AHRC, you may call the postgraduate general enquiries line on 0117 9876 543

How will I know whether my PR form has reached the AHRC in time?

- 269 **If you completed your qualification prior to 2008**, your PR form should have been submitted alongside your application form by your chosen institution. You should contact your institution to confirm that the PR form was attached to the application and submitted in good time to reach the AHRC by **1 May** deadline. Please note that if you attached a stamped self-addressed postcard this only confirms that your application has been received, not that it is complete and eligible. The postcard is not confirmation that the PR was attached to the application. **May is an extremely busy time in the office so you should not contact the AHRC to confirm receipt of the PR form during this month.**
- 270 **If you will not complete your qualification until 2008**, you should contact your chosen institution to confirm that the PR was submitted via email in good time for the **6 June** deadline. If you require further confirmation that your PR form has been received by the AHRC, you may call the postgraduate general enquiries line on 0117 9876 543.

How will I know whether my application has been successful?

- 271 Announcements of results are made in writing to all applicants between **late July and early September**. Please be patient – we receive a large number of applications each year and it takes a while to prepare, check and send out all the letters.
- 272 The letter notifying you of the results will be sent to the correspondence address given on your application form. You should ensure that we have a contact address for you for the period of late July to early September by informing us of any change of address. There is a space on the application form to insert the dates you will be residing at any address you have given us. If you have not heard from us by mid-September, please contact us to check that we have the correct address.

How should I contact the AHRC during the summer?

- 273 Wherever possible, please contact us in writing, preferably by e-mail.
- 274 Please do **not** telephone or send us an e-mail to ask about the outcome of your application as our staff are not authorised to give such information over the telephone or by e-mail.

What if my address changes during the summer?

- 275 You must inform us immediately in writing if your address changes during the summer, so that we can be sure we can contact you at the correct address between July and October 2007.

What must I do if I am offered an award?

- 276 **If you are offered an award, a letter will be sent to you in August.** We will require a response from you within a limited timescale so it is important that keep us informed of any change of address. If, for any reason, you are unable to deal personally with your mail between July and October 2008 (e.g. if you are abroad for several weeks) you may wish to arrange for someone to collect your post during this period.

When will I receive the first instalment of my maintenance grant?

- 277 You will need to complete the Acceptance Form sent with your award letter. This must be forwarded to your institutional authorities for completion and they should return it to us. We are unable to pay the first instalment of your maintenance grant until we receive this form. Your institution will be required to confirm in October or November that you have formally registered for your programme of study. If you fail to register, any maintenance grant that has been paid to you will be reclaimed.
- 278 For full award holders, provided we have received your Acceptance Form, the first instalment of your maintenance grant will be paid directly into your institution's bank account. If there is any delay in our receiving this information, it will take longer to release the payment. You will need to liaise with your institution to arrange with them the release of your maintenance grant. Your institution should release the money by 1 October assuming there are no delays in returning information to the AHRC.

If I am unsuccessful, can I resubmit my application?

279 If you are unsuccessful in one year's competition you may apply in the next year's competition without prejudice, providing you continue to meet the eligibility criteria for the scheme.

280 **If, however, you have applied to the Doctoral Awards scheme on two previous occasions unsuccessfully then you are not eligible to apply for a third time.** The only exception to this is applicants who have changed a major aspect of their application such as their institution or their proposed study.

281 We regret that because of the large volume of applications we receive, we do not ask assessors for feedback on individual applications. We are therefore unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants, either written or oral.

If I am unsuccessful, where else can I go for funding?

282 The AHRC is one of several public bodies that make awards for postgraduate study. Information on alternative sources of funding can be found on our website at: http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/apply/postgrad/other_opportunities.asp

Can I appeal against the Council's decision?

283 The AHRC has a complaints and appeals procedure, details of which can be found on our web site at:
http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/about/ahrc_policy_corporate_documents.asp.

284 Please bear in mind that the competition is fierce and, inevitably, many highly-qualified and strongly-supported applicants do not get an award. Each application receives careful scrutiny by the assessors, and their decision is reached in the context of competing applications from other candidates.

SECTION 11 - TAKING UP AN AWARD

When will my award start?

- 285 Award holders are normally expected to begin their programme of study on, or around, **1 October 2008**. This is the 'start date' of your award and, providing we have received all necessary paperwork, holders of a full award will receive the first instalment of their maintenance grant in early October.
- 286 If you are unable to take up your award in the year in which it was awarded, it will be rescinded and you will have to re-apply in the competition in the following year.

Can I defer my start date?

- 287 In certain circumstances, such as illness, or where there is a need to give a period of notice to an employer, we will consider deferring your start date, normally by up to three months. Any application for postponement must be made immediately through the institution at which you intend to study. You should write to the AHRC, in advance, including supporting letters from your institution. Please note that the agreement of the institution to delay your start date does not necessarily mean the AHRC will agree to postpone your award.

Do I have to live and study in the UK?

- 288 Awards are given for study at a Higher Education Institution in the UK. You are expected to remain in the UK during the tenure of your award (with the exception of temporary trips abroad for essential fieldwork, study visits or attendance at conferences), and to live within a reasonable distance of the institution. You must notify us immediately if, for any reason, you are unable to meet these requirements.

I have not completed my Master's degree, will this affect my award?

- 289 If you are currently undertaking a Master's course that you have not yet completed, the continuation of your doctoral award will be conditional on your being awarded your Master's degree. The institution should notify us, in writing, as soon as possible that you have completed your degree. Your award will commence as usual on 1 October, but it will be terminated on 31 March 2008 if we have not received written confirmation from the institution (Graduate Office or equivalent) by **29 February 2009** that you have successfully completed your degree.
- 290 If you gain a doctoral award immediately after completing a Master's course for which you received an AHRC award, and you go straight on to your doctoral research at the same institution, an additional back-payment will be made later in the autumn to cover the intervening period. This additional payment will be at the Master's rate for the year in which you undertook your Master's degree, not at the new rate. We shall require a letter from your institutional authorities confirming the date on which you began working full-time towards a doctoral degree.

Is my award monitored?

- 291 The continuation of your award is subject to the submission of a satisfactory annual report at the end of each year of the award. These forms are completed by you, your supervisor and your Head of Department.

How is my maintenance grant paid?

- 292 Payment will be made directly into your institution's bank account using the Bank Automated Clearing System (BACS).
- 293 For full-time awards and part-time awards, the maintenance grant is paid in four quarterly instalments in October, January, April and July each year.
- 294 The first instalment of the maintenance grant will be released once your institution has returned the Acceptance Form to us. This is generally within the first weeks of October, provided we have received all the necessary paperwork.

How are the tuition fees and the Research Training Fund paid?

- 295 Tuition fees are paid directly to your institution in December and May each year. The December instalment of your tuition fees will be paid only if you are fully registered on 15 December, and the May instalment will be paid only if you are fully registered on 15 May.
- 296 The Research Training Funds will be paid directly to your institution in one instalment in December, provided that you are fully registered on 15 December.

What if I get an academic position during the period of my award?

- 297 If you hold a full-time award and gain a salaried academic position at the institution at which you are studying during the period of your award, we will not be able to approve funding for part-time study and will be required to terminate your award.

Can I change from full-time to part-time study?

- 298 It may be possible, in exceptional circumstances, to transfer from full-time to part-time study or *vice versa*. Once you have transferred, you may not return to your original status.

What if I want to change my programme of study or transfer to another institution?

- 299 Awards are made for a particular programme of study at a particular institution. You will have made the case for support in your application on this basis and this is the information assessed by the AHRC. The Council will therefore consider a request to transfer to another course or institution **only in exceptional circumstances**. These might be exceptional personal circumstances or if the supervisor central to your programme of research leaves your institution. We will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis. You should not assume that the request will be granted.
- 300 Please note that:
- you must seek the AHRC's permission **in advance** of any transfer: permission will not be granted retrospectively
 - you must submit any such request to the AHRC in writing, and enclose supporting statements from the relevant authorities at both institutions
 - you will not be allowed to transfer an award for doctoral study to a department that is currently ineligible to submit applications for awards (see Table 2)

- you will not be allowed to change to a programme of study or institution at which you were offered a place **after** submitting your application to the AHRC.

The AHRC's framework of research training requirements

A: Principles behind the framework

1. Following one of the key recommendations of the Arts and Humanities Research Board's (AHRC's predecessor body) review of its postgraduate programmes, the AHRB developed in 2004 a framework of research training requirements. The framework is intended as a means of enabling institutions to reassure the AHRC that the doctoral students it funds receive appropriate and relevant preparation, training and support for their development, helping them both to complete a high-quality doctoral thesis and to develop a range of knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for their future employment.
2. The framework is founded on a needs-based approach to the provision of research and key skills training that is sensitive to the distinctive characteristics of research in the arts and humanities, and that also reflects the state of preparation, the developmental needs and the research subject of the individual student.
3. The AHRC's framework is not intended to be prescriptive about the details of the training institutions should provide. The framework thus gives examples of knowledge, skills and understanding to be developed to an appropriate level, rather than, for example, listing specific software packages or courses in which students should receive training.

B: AHRC funding for research training

4. In order to assist institutions to meet the requirements of the research training framework, the AHRC allocates additional funds for each of its doctoral award holders, including part-time and fees-only doctoral award holders, and for both new and continuing doctoral award holders.
5. The research training funds are paid directly to institutions in December each year (the first payment having been made in the 2004-2005 academic year). We will write to training co-ordinators (or equivalent) and to central finance officers making clear how much money will be paid each year, to which students it relates, and for what purpose it should be used.
6. The AHRC expects institutions to use this money to develop and enhance their research training provision for all AHRC-funded arts and humanities research students (including part-time and fees-only students), and to make this training available, as appropriate, to other students not receiving AHRC funding.
7. We have also established a scheme to support collaborative research training provision, and institutions can submit bids for this funding. This funding is intended as pump-priming to support institutions in establishing new, or enhancing existing, specialist research training provision for doctoral students in the arts and humanities in collaboration with other institutions. Further details on this scheme and timetable for bids are available on the AHRC's website.
8. In the collaborative research training scheme, we also seek applications from groups aiming to provide research training on a national scale (for

example, where organisations such as the British Library or The National Archive may provide training in collaboration with a number of HEIs).

9. The additional funding the AHRC is providing in support of research training complements the skills training payments provided by the Research Councils following the recommendations of Sir Gareth Roberts' report '*Set for Success*'. The AHRC was not originally included in the funding framework to implement the Roberts recommendations and we consequently developed a different approach to supporting skills training within the arts and humanities community. The research training payments made in support of the training framework were previously intended to support both generic skills training, as set out in the Roberts' recommendations, and subject-specific training. From the 2007/2008 academic year the training payments are intended to support generic skills training only. Details are set out in paragraphs 17-18 below. We are working with the other research councils, however, to adopt an integrated approach in the future wherever appropriate.

C: The departmental statement of research training provision

10. In the 2004, 2005 and 2006 competitions for postgraduate awards, heads of department (or school, faculty or equivalent) were asked to submit a Research Training Statement explaining what systems are in place to assess, deliver, review and monitor training provision for doctoral students.
11. In order to ensure a consistent approach across all disciplines and to minimise the administrative burden placed on institutions, the AHRC will join RCUK's Roberts Skills Monitoring as of June 2007. As a result, we will no longer require departments submitting applications in the Doctoral Awards Scheme to provide Research Training Statements. The AHRC does, however, consider it essential that departments continue to meet the requirements set out in the Research Training Framework. Applications submitted through the Doctoral Awards Scheme will be expected to demonstrate how the individual student's training needs will be addressed and to reassure assessors that the standard of provision detailed in previously submitted Research Training Statements is being maintained.

D: The AHRC's research training requirements

12. The AHRC's definition of 'training' in this context is a broad one, encompassing all the opportunities – formal and informal – available to doctoral students to develop as a researcher in their field and as a highly qualified individual in preparation for their future career.
13. Institutions will be expected to ensure that research students are appropriately prepared and have opportunities to develop in areas that are relevant to the demands of their discipline. These areas of training relate to ensuring students are equipped to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to their field of research. Training in these areas must be specifically tailored to the needs of individual students and their research topic, and must take account of the differing demands of text-based and practice-based research. It is unlikely that much of this training can be provided through generic courses for large numbers of students in the way that core generic skills training can be, but some of this training may be appropriately delivered at department (or equivalent) level.

14. Institutions will be required to explain what systems are in place to enable a doctoral student and their supervisor, in conjunction with another member of academic staff (such as the head of department) to review and reassess the student's training needs, on an annual basis. This is necessary not just to monitor the effectiveness of training provision, but also to take account of additional skills required as a research project develops.
15. The AHRC is **not** being prescriptive about the ways in which institutions provide and deliver training, but is rather asking institutions to provide information which the AHRC has not previously requested about how they meet the Council's new research training framework. There is no expectation that institutions should necessarily have to develop brand new training courses for this purpose, nor any preference for the way in which training is delivered (no requirement, for instance, that training courses be accredited, nor even any assumption that a formal training course is necessarily the most appropriate way to give students opportunities to develop certain skills and competencies).
16. **Examples of key subject-specific knowledge, understanding and skills** are:
 - i) Understanding theoretical issues, the nature of evidence and argument, and the relationships between practice, theory and criticism
 - ii) Developing research methods and skills and practical techniques appropriate to the project
 - iii) Developing knowledge and understanding of the research context of the project, and of trends in the discipline
 - iv) Developing knowledge, understanding and skills in analysis and synthesis of research material
 - v) Developing knowledge and understanding of related disciplines where appropriate
 - vi) Specialist knowledge, understanding and skills such as an additional language, methodology or technique.
17. Development of the core generic skills listed below will be a compulsory training requirement for all research students. Departments will be expected to assess the training students have already received in these areas, and to identify further generic skills training, including training at a higher level, needed by students both before and after their first year of doctoral research. The list below describes broad areas that the AHRC believes are likely to be relevant to all doctoral students in the arts and humanities.
18. The **core generic skills** that all research students should develop during the course of the doctoral study are:
 - i) Written communication skills appropriate for the academic context and beyond
 - ii) Oral presentation skills, including giving research papers and discussing others' research findings
 - iii) Designing and managing a project

- iv) ICT skills, including appropriate word processing and other ICT skills (such as creating and using spreadsheets and databases) as relevant to the research topic
- v) Bibliographical skills and contextualising practice-based research
- vi) Identifying and using web-based resources
- vii) Record-keeping and record management
- viii) Personal and career development, and broader employment-related skills (such as participating in workshops and conferences, or, if students undertake undergraduate teaching duties, relevant support and training).

E: Delivering research training

- 19. Institutions are expected to provide a 'menu' of research training provision from which the relevant elements for an individual student's needs could be selected. In some cases, inter-institutional collaboration may be the most appropriate way to provide this.
- 20. The Council expects departments (or equivalent) to undertake an analysis of training needs for each doctoral student, and to provide an agreed programme of training for each student to meet the needs identified, based on the skills and knowledge the student has already developed, and the further training and development they need in order to reach an appropriately high level of skills, knowledge and understanding.
- 21. The Council recognises that there are some skills that all research students need in order to undertake research effectively, some skills that are relevant to particular topics of study, and some skills that students develop through the process of conducting research. Training should always be relevant to the individual student's experience and requirements, and to their discipline and research topic.
- 22. Many institutions have found the *Joint Statement of the Skills Training Requirements for Research Students*, issued by the Research Councils and the then AHRB, a useful tool in framing their own research training provision. A copy of this Joint Statement is also available on the AHRC's website. Similarly, institutions may refer to the QAA's *Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes* (revised September 2004).

F: The relationship between training and development at Master's and doctoral level

- 23. The AHRC believes that studying for a Master's degree explicitly intended to prepare students for doctoral research is the best way to approach a doctorate. We also recognise that students approach a doctorate from various different routes, and that not all students complete a research preparation Master's degree first. Doctoral applicants who have not completed a research preparation Master's degree are therefore eligible to apply for AHRC funding in the same way as those who have.
- 24. All applicants – irrespective of their previous experience – and their departments are required to demonstrate in their AHRC application how their previous experience has prepared them for their proposed doctoral study, and to identify what further training and development is necessary.

G: Research training and development beyond the first year of doctoral study

25. The AHRC expects institutions and departments to provide a continuing programme of research training and development throughout the period of doctoral study, recognising that some skills are more appropriately developed, or need further development, after the first year of doctoral research.

H: Applying the framework to practice-based doctorates

26. The AHRC expects that training and development in research skills should be tailored to the needs of the individual student and of their research topic. The needs of those pursuing a practice-based doctorate will clearly differ from those pursuing purely historical or theoretical study. The AHRC's framework sets out some examples of subject-specific research training.

I: Assessed and accredited research training programmes

27. While some institutions have developed successful research training programmes that use credit systems, the AHRC does not advocate any single system of delivering research training above another.

J: The implications for part-time students and those not funded by the AHRC

28. The AHRC expects that the research training provision available to full-time students should equally be available to part-time students, and to fees-only award holders.
29. Institutions are encouraged to ensure that any research training provided with the support of the AHRC's funding is open to all relevant doctoral students, but with priority given to those funded by the AHRC.

K: The balance between generic and subject-specific research training

30. Institutions will be expected to conduct a needs analysis and provide training accordingly to ensure students are appropriately equipped with core generic skills that are relevant for all research students, and with subject-specific knowledge, understanding and skills. Institutions may find the joint statement of skills training requirements developed by the Research Councils a useful tool in addressing these issues (see also paragraph 27).
31. Institutions will be expected to ensure that research students are appropriately prepared and have opportunities to develop in areas that are relevant to the demands of their discipline. These areas of training relate to ensuring students are equipped to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to their field of research, and the training must be specifically tailored to the needs of individual students and their research topic.
32. Development of key generic skills should be a compulsory training requirement for all research students. Departments will be expected to assess the training students have already received in these areas, and to

identify further generic skills training, including training at a higher level, needed by students both before and after their first year of doctoral research. As well as being important in preparing students for their future career, the development of key generic skills should enable students to work more effectively during the course of their doctoral research.

33. Examples of both subject-specific and key generic skills are provided in paragraphs 16 to 18 above.

L: Collaborative training provision and 'minority' subjects

34. The AHRC has established the *Collaborative Research Training* scheme to support collaborative research training provision, to which institutions can apply. The funding is intended as pump-priming to support institutions in establishing new, or enhancing existing, specialist research training provision for doctoral students in the arts and humanities in collaboration with at least one other institution.
35. The scheme is intended to support the provision of specialised, subject- or discipline-specific research training, rather than generic training in key skills. Its aim is to enable institutions to offer such training to groups of students in several institutions where it is not possible or not cost-effective to provide the training to students in a single department or institution, or where collaboration will allow institutions to provide an enhanced quality of training and student experience.

M: Monitoring the quality of research training provision

36. Institutions will be required to explain on the application form what systems are in place for reviewing and reassessing training needs, on an annual basis. This is necessary not just to ensure that institutions themselves monitor the effectiveness of their training provision, but also to take account of the additional needs that arise as a student's work develops over the course of the doctorate.
37. The continuation of an AHRC doctoral award each year is currently subject to the submission of a satisfactory annual report at the end of each year of the award. These forms are completed by the student and their supervisor, and signed by the head of department. These forms now include questions about how research training needs have been identified, met and reviewed.
38. Answers to these questions on training will be used to inform the development of the Council's research training policy and the monitoring of institutional provision. They will not affect the continuation of an individual's award. Monitoring will be at the level of general standards of and mechanisms for the provision of research training, rather than of problems with identifying or meeting the needs of an individual student. We will continue to use these reports to ensure that overall, award holders are receiving the training they require and we will address any serious concerns raised in them.

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH COUNCILS

The AHRC is one of several public bodies that make awards for postgraduate study. Each is responsible for its own range of subjects and has different policies, procedures and regulations. Guidance on the borderlines between the subject areas covered by the AHRC and other bodies is given in Section 6.

Research Councils

There are six other Research Councils that make awards for postgraduate study in the subject areas for which each is responsible. Their addresses are as follows:

Biotechnology and Biological
Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon
SN2 1UH
Tel: 01793 413200
www.bbsrc.ac.uk

Medical Research Council (MRC)
20 Park Crescent
London
W1B 1AL
Tel: 0207 6365422
www.mrc.ac.uk

Economic and Social Research
Council (ESRC)
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon
SN2 1UJ
Tel: 01793 413000
www.esrc.ac.uk

Natural Environment Research
Council (NERC)
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon
SN2 1EU
Tel: 01793 411500
www.nerc.ac.uk

Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council (EPSRC)
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon
SN2 1ET
Tel: 01793 444000
www.epsrc.ac.uk

Science and Technology Facilities
Council (STFC)
Polaris House
North Star Avenue
Swindon
SN2 1SZ
Tel: 01793 442000
www.stfc.ac.uk

HOW TO APPLY FOR AN AHRC AWARD – SUMMARY TIMETABLE

<p>Early in 2008</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the guidance notes • If you have any queries about your eligibility, or the eligibility of your programme of study, contact the institution at which you intend to study. If they cannot help, then contact the AHRC • Download the appropriate application form • Download the DR or DR(Overseas) form, as appropriate, and, if required, the PR form • Ensure you have at least a provisional offer of a place from the institution at which you wish to study • Ask the institution what impact the capping will have on your application and check their timetable for the application process • Contact your two potential referees and check that they are available to provide a reference well before 1 May • If you have already started doctoral study, ensure that your supervisor is one of your referees
<p>Next</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Part I of the application form yourself • Forward a hard copy of your completed and signed Part I and the blank Parts II and III of the form to the first of your two referees (your referees are asked to complete the form electronically so you may wish to send your first referee a copy of your completed form by e-mail) • We recommend that you also forward a copy of the notes for completing the application form • Make sure you attach a stamped self-addressed postcard to the form so that we can acknowledge receipt of your application
<p>Next</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a Degree Results (DR) form to the institution at which you took your first degree. They should complete this form and send it to the institution at which you plan to study in time for it to be included with your application form for the closing date of 1 May 2008. If you are completing your degree in 2008 you need to ensure the DR form is sent to the institution where you are planning to study in good time for them to e-mail it to us by 11 July 2008. • If your first degree was taken at an institution outside the UK, then send the DR(Overseas) form to the institution at which you will be studying • If appropriate, send a Postgraduate Report (PR) form to the institution at which you took your Master's (or equivalent) degree. They should complete this form and forward it to the institution where you plan to study in time for it to be included with your application form and sent to us to ensure it arrives at the AHRC offices by 1 May 2008. If you are completing your degree in 2008 you need to ensure the PR form is sent to the institution where you are planning to study in good time for them to e-mail it to us by 6 June 2008. • The AHRC will not accept supplementary Postgraduate Reports. • If you completed your degree(s) at an institution outside the UK, you should forward your degree results and transcripts to the institution at which you will be studying
<p>Next</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your first referee completes a reference and forwards the entire form to your second referee
<p>Next</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your second referee completes a reference and forwards the entire form to the institution at which you intend to study

Next	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your prospective Head of Department completes the first part of Part III of the form, then forwards the entire form to the Registry
Next	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A senior member of the Registry staff checks the application form, attaches your DR and PR form if you have already graduated, completes the final page of Part III and sends the original, with your postcard attached, plus five copies to the AHRC • The form must reach the AHRC Office by 5.00pm on 1 May
Finally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is your responsibility to ensure that all parties have completed the form in time for it to reach us by 1 May • We cannot accept late applications, applications sent by fax or e-mail or incomplete applications

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY APPLICATION AFTER 1 MAY?

5pm 1 May	<p>Deadline for receipt of applications Applications for postgraduate awards are submitted by institutions, on behalf of students, on or before 1 May 2008.</p>
1 May – Mid May	<p>Vetting, sorting and initial logging of applications The applications are vetted and checked for completeness and logged by the postgraduate awards officers.</p>
Mid May to June	<p>Inputting applications on to database The applications are processed, checked for eligibility and details entered onto the database by the postgraduate awards officers.</p>
Mid May to June	<p>Applications sent to panel members for assessment Once processed, applications are grouped in batches, by panel, scheme and subject area, ready to be sent to panel members from mid-May to mid-June. (Over 200 applications per panel member)</p>
Mid May to June	<p>Applications assessed by individual panel members Each application in the Master's schemes is assessed by two panel members and each application in the doctoral awards scheme is assessed by three panel members. Panel members do not take part in the evaluation of any application where a conflict of interest could be construed (for example if the applicant has attended the assessor's institution). In some cases, the panel to which an application has been submitted may refer it to another panel for supplementary advice. In a few cases, an application may be transferred to another scheme or to another panel. In the latter case we will write to the applicant to confirm this.</p> <p>The grade to be awarded to each application is made up of two components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an assessor's mark, reflecting the assessment of all the information provided on the application form and on the DR and, where applicable, PR forms • a qualifications mark, based on the assessment of the undergraduate degree results (for all schemes), and postgraduate progress (for the Doctoral Awards Scheme). <p>The assessor's mark reflects the assessment of the entire application. This one overall grade for each application will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect the assessor's judgement of how well the application matches the assessment criteria for the appropriate scheme. This should be the best combination of person, project, preparation and place • reflect the assessor's judgement of the applicant's undergraduate performance (DR or DR(Overseas) form)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for doctoral applicants, reflect the assessor's judgement of the applicant's actual or predicted Master's degree performance (PR form) and, if appropriate, their performance in their doctoral study.
Early July	<p>Panel meetings held – all applications discussed and grades agreed</p> <p>Panel meetings are held in late June and early July each year. Prior to panel meetings, individual panel members consider and grade the applications in their subject area. The panel then meets to discuss these assessments and agree a final assessors' grade, undergraduate mark and, for doctoral applicants, a postgraduate mark. Also for doctoral applicants, where applicable, the panel will be asked to agree whether the application is eligible for four years' funding. Complex cases (e.g. subject domain issues) are looked at carefully during the meeting.</p> <p>In addition to the panel members, the postgraduate awards officer responsible for the panel and at least one senior member of staff from the postgraduate division will attend the meeting to record the panel's final, agreed grades and marks for each application on a consolidated marklist.</p>
Early to Mid July	<p>After Panel Meeting</p> <p>Once all the panels have met to determine their grades, applications are placed in a rank order on the basis of the agreed assessors' grade. Within this list, in the Master's schemes, applications will be ranked by the agreed undergraduate qualifications mark (UG mark). In the doctoral scheme, applications will be ranked by the agreed assessors' grade, then by the agreed postgraduate report mark (PG mark) and then by the agreed undergraduate qualifications mark (UG mark).</p> <p>Where a DR form is received after the panel meeting, the form is sent to the appropriate panel convener if the outcome of the application could be affected by the applicant's qualifications mark. If the outcome will not be affected, then the mark indicated by the HEI is automatically accepted.</p>
Mid July	<p>Postgraduate Committee meets – funding decisions agreed</p> <p>The committee uses a formula for the allocation of awards to each of the broad areas covered by its peer review panels. The formula takes into account both the volume of applications received and also measures of the size of the research-active and postgraduate populations in each subject area based on data gathered by the Higher Education Statistics Agency.</p> <p>Final decisions about the number of awards to be made in each subject area and in each scheme are made by the postgraduate committee in July, with advice from panel conveners regarding the spread of awards across the subjects within their panel.</p>

End of July	<p>Distribution of awards finalised</p> <p>Once the postgraduate committee has met, awards are made by rank order down to the likely border zone. At this stage, panel conveners will be asked to look again at any borderline applications. Borderline applications are those with the same assessors' grade and the same undergraduate degree results' mark or/and postgraduate report mark. The convener will use the panel's discussions, together with their own expertise, to put these applications in order of merit.</p>
August and September	Applicants notified of outcomes
September	Acceptance forms completed by students and returned by institutions
September and October	First maintenance grant payments made to the institution for transfer to the student by the start date of their award

The AHRC adheres to the Data Protection Principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998

Applicants should be aware that information they provide will be stored in electronic form. It will be provided to those who assess applications and used to compile lists of award holders. We endeavour to ensure that the data we hold is accurate and we ask applicants and award holders to keep us informed of any changes.

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