

## PGR Career Enhancement Placement Scheme

The Doctoral School wants to give you as many opportunities as possible to both enrich your student experience and develop skills to support future employment pathways. Postgraduate researchers at Royal Holloway who have been able to secure placements during their research degree have consistently reported how positive the experiences have been, providing them with the opportunity to develop a wealth of employability skills and invaluable networking links. The PGR Career Enhancement Placement Scheme has therefore been set up as a pilot for a second year in 2023/24 to more postgraduate researchers to undertake an otherwise unpaid placement by providing funding to support this.

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### A What placements are covered by the scheme?

1. The purpose of the placement should be to enhance your employability skills and career prospects i.e. not integral to your research.
2. The scheme covers unpaid placements only.
3. The placement should start before the end of June 2024 and any approved travel expenses claimed by 12 July 2024.
4. The scheme covers external placement opportunities sourced by yourself or those sourced by the university, which will be advertised on the PGR Career Enhancement Placement Scheme webpage.

### B What are the eligibility criteria?

1. The scheme is open to any current Royal Holloway postgraduate researcher who is not able to secure funding to support the placement elsewhere (i.e. if you are a UKRI-funded, it is expected that you make use of the funding made available via the placement scheme run by your DTP rather than this scheme).
2. The scheme is open to both full-time and part-time students. It is also open to you if you are sponsored on a Student Route visa, but with a few [restrictions](#).
3. You can apply for the scheme at any point during your studies, including once you have submitted your thesis and are waiting for your viva / making your corrections.
4. It is important that you have the support of your supervisor to undertake this placement.

## C What is on offer?

### 1. Financial support

The scheme provides you with financial support to allow you to undertake an otherwise unpaid placement.

- Funding is available to support a placement of up to 3 months full time (or 6 months part time):
  - If you are a university-funded or co-funded student, you will continue to receive your stipend payment for the duration of the placement, with a commensurate extension to your funding end date.
  - If you are self-funded, you will receive a bursary of £396 per week full time during the placement (the equivalent of a studentship stipend). If you are undertaking the placement part time, the bursary will be paid pro rata.
- The scheme also allows you to apply for travel expenses of up to £500 in some cases, and this will be indicated on the placement opportunity **Location** details (anything requiring in person attendance which is more than 30 miles from the Egham Campus will be eligible for travel support).
  - All travel expenses must be claimed by 12 July 2024. If your placement continues beyond that point, you will be required to self-fund any placement related travel costs.

**Please note that this financial support is contingent on satisfactory engagement on the placement.**

### 2. Extension to submission deadline

Your submission deadline will be extended by the pro rata duration of your placement:

	Mode of study at time of placement	Placement	Impact on student record
1	Full-time / writing up (prev. full-time)	Full-time	The expectation is that you will interrupt your studies for the period of the placement, which will automatically mean that your thesis submission deadline is extended by the duration of your placement.
2	Part-time / writing up (prev. part-time)	Part-time	The expectation is that you will interrupt your studies for the period of the placement, which will automatically mean that your thesis submission deadline is extended by the duration of your placement.
3	Full-time / writing up (prev. full-time)	Part-time	The expectation is that you will continue with your studies while doing the placement. Your submission deadline however will be extended by the pro rata duration of the placement (e.g. if you spent 15 – 20 hours a week on the placement for 2 months, your submission deadline would be extended by 1 month). If you think it would be more appropriate to interrupt your studies during this period, please contact the <a href="#">Doctoral School</a> to discuss. Please note that an interruption is not possible for students on a Student Route Visa.

If you are on a Student Route Visa, you are not permitted by your visa to work more than 20 hours a

week so your placement would need to be part-time. For further advice on this, please contact the [International Student Support Office](#).

**Please note that the submission deadline extension is contingent on satisfactory engagement on the placement.**

3. Placement agreement

If your application is successful, Royal Holloway will work with the placement provider to draw up a placement agreement between, you, Royal Holloway and the placement provider so everyone involved is clear on the expectations of the placement before you start.

## **D**     **How to apply?**

### Application for a placement opportunity you have sourced yourself

Please note that you should apply at least 4 weeks before you wish to start the placement, in order to give time for the approval process and then the placement agreement to be put into place. Once you have identified a possible placement provider and have had informal discussions to check that they would be happy to offer you a placement opportunity but are not in a position to pay you for this:

1. Discuss your plans with your supervisor, as you will need your supervisor's support to do the placement.
2. Contact the Doctoral School if you have any questions regarding the scheme.
3. If you are sponsored on a Royal Holloway Student Route visa, contact the International Student Support Office for advice on how much you would be able to work during the placement.
4. Submit your application to the Doctoral School via the PGR Career Enhancement Placement application form. Please note that you will need to provide the contact details at the organisation where you would like to do the placement as well as proof that your supervisor supports the application.
5. In deciding whether your application will be successful, the Doctoral School will consider the potential benefits for both you and your placement provider. An interview may be requested.

### Application for a placement opportunity advertised by the university

All placement opportunities will be advertised via the [PGR Career Enhancement Placement Scheme](#) webpage.

1. Discuss your plans with your supervisor, as you will need your supervisor's support to do the placement.
2. Contact the Doctoral School if you have any questions regarding the advertised placement.
3. If you are sponsored on a Royal Holloway Student Route visa, contact the International Student Support Office for advice on how much you would be able to work during the placement.
4. Submit your application to the Doctoral School via the application form linked to the advert. Please note that you will need to provide proof that your supervisor supports the application.
5. The applications will be short-listed before being sent to the placement provider for their final decision. An interview may be requested.

## **E** If your application is successful, what happens next?

### 1. Before the placement starts

The Doctoral School will draw up a placement agreement between you, Royal Holloway and the placement provider, so that all parties are aware of expectations.

The Doctoral School will:

- support you with any risk assessment process required
- organise the appropriate financial support
- amend your student record as appropriate

### 2. During the placement

The Doctoral School will be in contact with you and your placement provider to ensure that the placement is going smoothly.

### 3. At the end of the placement

Both you and your placement provider will be asked to complete a short report on the benefits of the experience.

## **F** What if the placement does not turn out as expected?

The placement agreement will be put in place prior to the start of your placement so that all parties are clear on their role in the placement and therefore help prevent any misunderstandings during the placement. In the unlikely event that the placement is cut short by either the student or the placement provider for any reason, the financial support and submission deadline extension will be amended to reflect this.

## **G** Any questions?

Please contact the Doctoral School: [doctoralschool@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:doctoralschool@rhul.ac.uk)