

Difficult Language Training Guidance Notes

Quick glance

- Support if a student needs to acquire or develop a working ability with a difficult language in order to carry out fieldwork, which will require extensive time away from studies.
- Normally involves an extension to studentship (depending on award arrangements).
- Any anticipated DLT should have been mentioned in the student's original application.
- Pre-approval of expenses required, usually 3 months in advance of start of training.
- Available to students in the doctoral phase of the award.
- Students may apply for a DLT grant once over the lifetime of their award.

Overview

The ESRC allows extra studentship support if a student needs to acquire or develop a working ability with a non-English language in order to carry out fieldwork (including UK fieldwork) or other parts of their research. This is over and above the funded length of the studentship, in the form of an extension to the studentship period. Any anticipated DLT should have been mentioned in the student's original application to their University, and supervisor support is required when applying.

Applications will be considered where the training is considered essential to the success of the research project, and the case for this must be made in the application. Language training may take place in the UK or overseas, however options in the UK should be considered in the first instance. Course costs would normally be supported under the RTSG scheme, and students may apply for support for additional expenses under the DLT scheme if they need to travel away from their institution to undertake the training.

Eligible costs include travel, accommodation costs, and visas. For any overseas trips over 3 months it would be expected that accommodation costs would be covered by a student's usual funding arrangements, and they are therefore advised to make their plans accordingly. As the fund is limited, large scale, accredited training courses in the UK and overseas cannot be supported as the cost is too high.

Overseas visits must not be undertaken if the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises against visiting the country concerned. Further guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>.

Extension Details

The length of extension (ranging from 3 months to a maximum of 12 months) depends upon current skill level, the difficulty of the language, and estimated time taken away from studies to complete language training. As a general rule, extensions beyond six months are only allowed if the student needs to spend an extended period of time overseas in order to obtain these language skills. For students who have undertaken a Masters course prior to the doctorate, the ESRC expects that some progress with language acquisition will have been made and therefore extensions beyond six months will not normally be approved. DLT support is not available to students with 2+3 awards as support for language training is incorporated into the award.

Please note that the total period of extensions on any award will not normally exceed 12 months, and cannot exceed the University enrolment period or thesis submission deadline. Approval of an application and any subsequent extension to your studentship relates only to your funding arrangements, and will not affect your University status and deadlines. You should contact your Department if you have queries about your enrolment status.

Overseas travel requirements

Please ensure you have read your University's health and safety guidelines and policies relating to overseas travel. You should also check with your department for any University and Departmental risk assessment rules concerning fieldwork and travel, along with Foreign Office website for updates on the safety of overseas destinations at <https://www.gov.uk/browse/abroad> and <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>. The DTP cannot provide support for overseas travel if the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises against visiting the country or area concerned.

Travel should be covered by the travel insurance policy of the student's host institution.

Application Process

You should apply to the DTP Office for your home institution by the relevant deadline which allows approximately **three months before your proposed training**, by submitting an application form available on the DTP website. Applications must be submitted prior to the start of training, retrospective applications will not be considered.

The application deadlines can be found on the DTP website. If an opportunity arises outside these deadlines your DTP Office may be able to consider an ad-hoc application; please contact them for advice.

It is possible to apply to more than one funding scheme at the same time, eg. it is fine to apply for DLT and OFE support together (if relevant).

If a grant is approved, funds will be distributed as per local practice at your home institution and only upon satisfactory completion of any required risk assessments for travel. It is your responsibility to ensure that risk assessments are completed prior to your intended dates of travel. We recommend that you complete the risk assessment prior to or while you are completing your application.

Once an application is approved, no further funding will be provided beyond the amount confirmed in the award letter.

Completing the Application Form

When completing your application, think of it as an opportunity to practice grant-writing skills. You must make a strong case, demonstrating careful planning and investigation of costs options to ensure value for money.

Summary of Proposed Activity

Please provide full details of the training being undertaken.

Level of Funding Requested

Provide estimates of the costs you expect to incur that are above those usually covered by your funding arrangements (e.g. flights, accommodation).

You must provide evidence to support your cost estimates and amounts requested, eg. printout from a price comparison website for accommodation, flights, etc.

Case for Support

In this section you should provide a clear and reasoned case for the support for the training, explaining how it is essential to the completion of your project. If you are applying for support for training overseas, make sure to explain why it cannot be undertaken in the UK.

Please provide information on your current skill level with the language, prior training, and estimated time to be spent on the training.

The DTP will be considering how your application shows value for money therefore you should ensure you justify the cost estimates listed, particularly if they are not the most cost-effective options.

Any Other Relevant Information

Please list anything further that you may feel is relevant for consideration of your application. The language training must be integral to the completion of your project and as such the ESRC expects that it should have been clearly identified in your initial research proposal. If it was not listed in your application, please explain what has changed and why it is now considered essential.