



Strathclyde Research Studentship Scheme (SRSS)

GUIDE FOR STAFF

**RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARDS (REA)
STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS (SEA)
JOHN ANDERSON RESEARCH AWARDS (JARA)**

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Strathclyde Research Studentship Scheme (SRSS) Overview

Strathclyde Research Studentship Scheme (SRSS) doctoral studentships are available annually for excellent students and excellent research projects. There are two main sources of funding: the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council - Doctoral Training Partnership (EPSRC - DTP) awards and central University funds.

The SRSS has three distinct allocations: Research Excellence Awards (REA); Student Excellence Awards (SEA); and John Anderson Research Awards (JARA). The scheme is managed centrally by the [PGR Funding Team](#) who align initial REA and SEA funds with the Faculties, who in turn manage the support provided to Departments/Schools on a competitive basis. JARA funding is not managed via Faculty allocations but is awarded directly to applicants on a competitive basis, following panel review, all coordinated by the PGR Funding Team.

The SRSS application process is academic-led and, to apply, academics must complete and submit an application on the dedicated [PGR Studentship System](#), detailing the case for support and the full proposed financial package. The table below indicates the maximum SRSS funding request *per annum* for the duration of a given studentship. Associated with this, applicants are responsible for ensuring the remaining finances are in place to fund the full studentship, covering Home fees and the annual [UKRI minimum stipend](#) level. This requirement for leveraging has been designed in order to maximise student numbers and encourage external funding contributions, facilitating more externally collaborative research. SRSS funds **cannot** be mixed with any other central University funding awards (e.g. within International Strategic Partner (ISP) Studentship Clusters and as part of initial Strathclyde Centres for Doctoral Training (SCDT) allocations).

EPSRC DTP studentships are funded for 3.5 years, whereas University studentships are funded for 3 years.

Maximum SRSS Request per Annum		
	University	EPSRC DTP
REA	£12,000	£13,000
SEA	£12,000	£13,000
JARA	£12,000	N/A

Submission deadlines are tabled below, although there will be earlier Faculty and Departmental/School deadlines. It should also be stated that, to facilitate earlier support and approval of individual studentships, where required, following Departmental/School and Faculty communications and alignment, REA and SEA applications can be submitted in advance of any of the stated deadlines. All applications are reviewed by the PGR Funding Team in RKES and approved by the Deputy Associate Principal, Research & Knowledge Exchange (DAP (R&KE)).

	Applications Close	Faculty Ranking	DAP Approval
REA	End of December	Mid- January	End of January
SEA	Mid-March	End of March	Mid-April
JARA	End of April	Mid-May	June

**Please note that individual Faculties will have their own internal deadlines prior to the Faculty ranking process.*

Research Excellence Award (REA)

Criteria

- Funding is provided to enhance research excellence through defined projects that support the University's strategic research ambitions, with a focus on internationally-leading research quality, and the number of postgraduate research opportunities in the specified area at the University.
- Faculties are responsible for managing funds across Departments/Schools, as well as setting deadlines for Faculty review prior to final submission of applications.
- A maximum of £12k per annum for 3 years (University) or £13k per annum for 3.5 years (EPSRC DTP) can be requested.
- The remaining funding to ensure full studentship packages must be contributed from alternative sources, such as External contributions, and Faculty, Departmental/School, or Supervisors' budgets.

- Both EPSRC DTP and University funding is available for REA studentships.

Student Excellence Award (SEA)

Criteria

- Funding is provided for excellent named students with at least a 2:1 undergraduate degree (or equivalent). Faculties may set a 1st Class honours degree requirement.
- Faculties are responsible for managing funds across Departments/Schools, as well as setting deadlines for Faculty review prior to final submission of applications.
- A maximum of £12k per annum for 3 years (University) or £13k per annum for 3.5 years (EPSRC DTP) can be requested.
- The remaining funding to ensure full studentship packages must be contributed from alternative sources, such as External contributions, and Faculty, Departmental/School, or Supervisors' budgets.
- Applications must include: (i) an up-to-date CV; (ii) 2 appropriate and relevant references (signed, on headed paper and dated (within the last 6 months)); and (iii) transcripts for all qualifications whether awarded or ongoing (including an overall degree classification and officially translated, if necessary).
- Both EPSRC DTP and University funding is available for SEA studentships.

John Anderson Research Award (JARA)

Criteria

- Funding is provided for excellent named students with a 1st Class honours degree or Masters with Distinction (or equivalent) awarded within a relevant cognate discipline, with internal and external recognition, and a proven commitment to the field of study.
- Following competitive review and ranking at panel, allocations are managed at University level by the PGR Funding Team in RKES.
- A maximum of £12k per annum for 3 years can be requested.
- Applications require a minimum contribution of 15% of the total student funding package (fees and stipend) that can be evidenced as being external support.
- The remaining funding to ensure full studentship packages for must be contributed from alternative sources, such as External contributions, and Faculty, Departmental/School, or Supervisors' budgets.
- International students are permitted to contribute towards the 15% minimum external funding requirement themselves, for example, as part of the difference between the Home and international fee rates. However, all stipend contributions must flow from established budget accounts within the University.
- In addition to assessment of student and research project quality, and alignment with Department/School, Faculty, and University strategy, consideration will also be given to the level of external funds being contributed.
- Applications must include: (i) an up-to-date CV; (ii) 2 appropriate and relevant references (signed, on headed paper and dated (within the last 6 months)); (iii) transcripts for all qualifications whether awarded or ongoing (including an overall degree classification and officially translated, if necessary); and (iv) evidence of external funding.
- The number of JARA applications are not limited per Faculty, although only around 20 to 22 JARA studentships in total can be funded each year (with this being announced annually).
- Only University funding is available for JARA studentships.

EPSRC DTP-funded REAs and SEAs

Student Eligibility

- The eligibility criteria for UKRI funding have changed for studentships commencing in the 2021/22 academic year. Now, all home **and** international students are eligible to apply for UKRI funding which will cover the full stipend and tuition fees at the home rate (not the international rate).
- Under the new criteria, UKRI have stipulated a maximum percentage of international students that can be recruited each year against individual training grants (see 30% rule). This will be managed by the [PGR Funding Team](#) for all EPSRC DTP studentships.
- To be classed as a home student, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a UK national (meeting [residency requirements](#)), or;
 - Have settled status, or;
 - Have pre-settled status (meeting [residency requirements](#)), or;
 - Have indefinite leave to remain or enter.
- If a student does not meet the criteria above, they will be classed as an international student. The international portion of the tuition fee cannot be funded by the UKRI grant and must be covered from other sources. International students are permitted to self-fund the difference between the home and international fee rates.

50% Rule

All UKRI-funded students who are receiving EPSRC funding must receive at least 50% of their fees and stipend through the EPSRC grant for the duration of the studentship.

Fees and Stipend Levels

All EPSRC DTP-funded students must have a full [UKRI minimum stipend](#) in place for the duration of the studentship. Financial contributions from international candidates can only be made towards the difference between Home and international fee levels, not the stipend. Home fees and [UKRI minimum stipend](#) must be covered by the funding package. Stipend payments to students cannot be used to cover the fees. The EPSRC DTP contribution to a studentship must cover the tuition fee with remaining funds allocated to stipend. Stipend top-ups are allowed, but detailed breakdowns of these must be provided to the PGR Funding Team for inclusion in studentship letter.

Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)

EPSRC DTP-funded students are also able to access RTSG funding (£1,500 p.a.) to cover projects costs, such as conference attendance, consumables, and travel. This funding can be accessed through the Departmental/School EPSRC DTP subproject activity code 469. These funds must only be used for the specific students who are receiving the stipend and/or fees from the EPSRC DTP grant. Due to such students receiving these training support funds, EPSRC DTP students are *not* eligible to apply for available [PGR Travel Award](#) support. The RTSG is for costs associated with the student and the project, and cannot be used for academic expenses or costs which should be covered by other available University funds (e.g. for computers/laptops, general laboratory costs). An RTSG guidance document can be found on the PGR Funding Team's [Portal pages](#).

Funding Allocation

All EPSRC DTP funding should be split evenly over the 42-month duration of a studentship (i.e. a studentship awarded a total of £45,500 of EPSRC DTP funds should use £13k per annum). However, where this is not possible, the EPSRC DTP funds can be profiled differently over the duration of the studentship on agreement with the PGR Funding Team.

30% Rule

EPSRC allow universities to offer up to 30% of new EPSRC studentships in any one year per grant with open eligibility to support the very best students. The 30% rule is grant-wide; therefore, any requests for students/ EPSRC DTP candidates to be considered under the 30% rule must be made to the PGR Funding Team in RKES, prior to the student being recruited. The international portion of the tuition fee cannot be funded by the UKRI grant and must be covered from other sources. The difference between the Home and International fee levels can be covered through a variety of funding sources (e.g. student self-funding, Department/Faculty, external funding). The Faculties can provide further information. Students under this rule must be classed as 'International Doctoral Scholars' on the UKRI's Joint Electronic System (Je-S) for the purposes of reporting.

Joint Electronic System (Je-S)

As a condition of UKRI studentship funding, all UKRI-funded students' details must be entered into UKRI's Joint Electronic System (Je-S) by no later than one month after the student commences their studies. Academic supervisors will be contacted by the PGR Funding Team to request the necessary information in a dedicated form, which will then be entered into the Je-S. Each funding council has a dedicated form, which can be found

on PGR Funding Team's [Portal pages](#). The PGR Funding Team must be informed of all changes to a student's status throughout the duration of the studentship as these must be recorded on Je-S.

Medical Leave

For EPSRC-funded SRSS students, the EPSRC DTP grant will cover stipend payments for absences covered by a medical certificate for up to thirteen weeks (3 months) within any 12-month period. Voluntary suspension must be taken for the period to allow fee payments to be suspended and the studentship duration to be extended.

Students, or their Department/School or supervisor, should contact the PGR Funding Team as soon as possible when considering taking voluntary suspension, as it may have an impact on the overall funding.

Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, and Parental Leave

EPSRC-funded SRSS students are entitled to up to 52 weeks (12 months) of maternity leave. The first 26 weeks (6 months) is paid at full stipend rate. The following 13 weeks (3 months) are paid at a level commensurate with employee entitlements to statutory maternity pay. The final 13 weeks are not paid. Partners are entitled to up to 10 days paid Ordinary Paternity Leave on full stipend. Partners may be entitled to up to 50 weeks of Shared Parental Leave, depending on the individual circumstances; however, EPSRC do not have a paid leave provision for Shared Parental Leave. EPSRC-DTP students can apply to the University's PGR Leave Support Fund for paid Shared Parental Leave, Carers leave and Discretionary leave. Voluntary suspension should be taken for the period to allow fee payments to be suspended and the studentship duration to be extended.

Extensions to maximum duration of study, other than for the reasons above, are not recognised by EPSRC, and students who are granted extensions by the University will be recorded as late submissions.

University-funded REAs, SEAs and JARAs

Eligibility

All students (Home, EU and International) are eligible for University-funded SRSS awards. An international student is permitted to contribute the difference between the Home and International fees. Where a candidate has agreed to cover this difference, a letter is required from the candidate confirming the contribution.

Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)

University-funded SRSS students do not receive RTSG funding from Central sources. All University funded SRSS students are eligible to apply for a [PGR Travel Award](#).

Fees and Stipend Levels

All University-funded SRSS students must have a full [UKRI minimum stipend](#) in place for the duration of the studentship. Financial contributions from international candidates can only be made towards the difference between Home and international fee levels, not the stipend. Home fees and [UKRI minimum stipend](#) must be covered by the funding package. Stipend payments to students cannot be used to cover the fees.

Funding Allocation

All University funding must be split evenly over the 36-month duration of a studentship (i.e. a studentship awarded a total of £36,000 of central University funds must use £12k per annum). Any funds not used within the allocated academic year cannot be used in a later year, and will be lost. If a student starts late or takes voluntary suspension for any reason, attempts should be made to ensure the SRSS funds are used in full in any given year and the contributions from other sources are used at a later date.

Paid Leave

All University-funded SRSS students, without access to these forms of paid leave, can apply to the University's PGR Leave Support Fund for paid Medical, Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Parental, Shared Parental, Carers and Discretionary leave. Voluntary suspension should be taken for the period to allow fee payments to be suspended and the studentship duration to be extended.

All SRSS Awards

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring

A new internal monitoring and reporting process for all SRSS studentships (UKRI and University-funded) has been established to facilitate the collection of data for internal and external reporting requirements. Full guidance on the new process and requirements can be found on the PGR Funding Team's [Portal pages](#).

It is strongly recommended that all supervisors on SRSS studentships undertake Strathclyde's Equality and Diversity Office's suite of [training](#) prior to commencing supervision on a project, including the *Supporting Transgender Staff and Students*, *Bullying and Harassment*, *Race in the Workplace*, *Recruitment & Selection* and *Diversity in the Workplace* courses. Where possible, supervisors will have undertaken this training prior to starting recruitment.

Process Following Approval on the PGR Studentship System

Once SRSS applications have been fully approved by the DAP via the PGR Studentship System, the academic applicant will be notified via email by the PGR Funding Team.

Once a REA application is approved, recruitment for a candidate should start straight away. Advertisement of individual studentships are the responsibility of Departments/Schools/Faculties. Once a student is identified the supervisor must ensure that the candidate has made a PhD application via Pegasus. Once a SEA or JARA application is approved the academic applicant must ensure that the candidate has made a PhD application via Pegasus. This should normally be done prior to a SEA/JARA application.

Once SRSS applicants have applied via Pegasus, the PGR Funding Team will check the candidate's eligibility for the funding source, and issue a studentship letter to the candidate once satisfied that they meet all eligibility requirements. Studentship letters sent by RKES serve as confirmation of SRSS awards to candidates. Candidates should not be informed by Departments/Schools that they have received a studentship until the RKES funding letter has been received.

The PGR Funding Team must be notified if a student declines an offer. If a SEA student declines an offer the Faculty will then be consulted to determine if they are happy for the studentship to remain with the Department/School or if they would like to reallocate within the Faculty. In either case, a new full application is required, with all necessary documentation, and will then require subsequent final approval by the DAP. If a REA student declines an offer, the supervisor can re-advertise the studentship but must ensure a new student can be found for the intended start date of 1st October. A change of primary supervisor or project title on a REA must be approved by the PGR Funding Team, and a new application may be required. If a student declines a JARA, the supervisor cannot re-recruit against the studentships, as it will be offered to the next appropriate JARA reserve candidate as identified via the University-level ranking process.

The latest start date for a student will vary for each individual studentship, depending on the level of central University or EPSRC funding. In attempts to ensure full use of centrally managed funding, University-funded SRSS students can start no later than 1st March within the academic year of award (i.e. if it is a 2019/20 SRSS studentship, the latest the student could start would be 1st March 2020), or 1st April within the academic year of award for EPSRC DTP-funded studentships. If a later start requires to be considered, please contact the PGR Funding Team for advice and possible approval.

Working Hours and Additional Work

Students in full-time employment are not eligible for a stipend or fee payments of any kind from the SRSS. A student in part-time employment may be eligible for a part-time award, which must be 50% of full-time.

In the interests of avoiding excessive commitments and ensuring appropriate focus on doctoral study, internal teaching/tutoring for doctoral researchers must be limited to a **maximum of 7 hours in any given week**.

Full-time SRSS studentship holders cannot take on other paid work during the University's normal business hours (i.e. Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) (with the exception of internal teaching/tutoring as detailed above).

Changes of Status

Students can only change status once during their funded duration (i.e. change from part-time (PT) to full-time (FT) or other way). No change of status is permitted during the final 6 months of the funded period. SRSS-funded students, or their Department/School or supervisor, should contact the PGR Funding Team as soon as possible when any change in student status is being considered. Students can only be registered at 1 FTE (i.e. FT) or 0.5 FTE (i.e. PT).

Students who withdraw or permanently leave the country during their doctoral studies will have their studentships stopped. SRSS-funded students, or their Department/School or supervisor, should contact the PGR Funding Team as soon as possible when any student is about to withdraw or permanently leave the country during the period of funded doctoral study.

HoD/DoR Comments Guidance

REA:

The focus of this award is to enhance research excellence through defined projects that support the University's strategic research ambitions. Comments should concentrate on the strategic alignment of the proposed research project, as well as how the project fits with other research activities in the Department/School and Faculty. If a student is already attached to the project, the comments should also address the quality and fit of the student to the project.

SEA:

SEAs are awarded to excellent named students. HoD/DoR comments should focus on the quality and experience of the student, as well as how their skills fit the project. Additionally, the research project quality and alignment with University, Faculty, and Department/School strategy should also be addressed.

JARA:

JARA studentships are awarded to students who hold a First-Class honours degree or Masters with Distinction (or equivalent) awarded within a relevant cognate discipline. HoD/DoR comments should focus mainly on the quality of the student and their fit with the project. Additionally, the research project quality and alignment with University, Faculty, and Department/School strategy should also be addressed.

Responsibilities and Roles

Academic Applicant

- Populating the SRSS application with all required information and ensuring all necessary documentation is attached prior to submission.
- Notifying the PGR Funding Team of a potential candidate for a REA studentship.
- Initially checking the eligibility of a candidate.
- Providing information for Je-S record creation.
- Supplying applicant details to nominated Departmental/School Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (E,D&I) contacts as soon as applications are received, to facilitate the University's E,D&I reporting procedures.

Faculties

- Disseminating scheme launch information across the Faculty.
- Managing the Faculty competition for the SRSS.
- Ensuring all applications are complete when submitted to the PGR Funding Team prior to DAP review.
- Ranking applications.
- Ensuring applications adhere to EPSRC and central University funding regulations.
- Advertisement of studentships, once approved (in some Faculties this responsibility will be at Department/School level).
- Representing the Faculty at the annual JARA panel meeting.

PGR Funding Team

- Working with the DAP to finalise Faculty allocations and launch the SRSS annually.
- Reviewing all SRSS applications, including attachments, and ensuring completeness and appropriateness of funding packages prior to informing the DAP of readiness for review.
- Confirming award and approval of SRSS applications.
- Checking eligibility of candidates once they have applied via Pegasus and the SRSS application has been approved.
- Issuing studentship letters.
- Reviewing and 2nd locking of financial records on PGR Apps.
- Je-S record creation and maintenance for EPSRC DTP-funded studentships once completed forms have been received.
- Final reconciliations of EPSRC DTP grants and the University funding.

Department/School (PGR Admin)

- Entering accurate budget information for payment of fees and stipends on the PGR Apps system to allow students to register and receive stipend payments.
- Amending and updating the PGR Studentship System information, as necessary.
- Raising required journals if errors are made or when there is a change in status (e.g. changing to part-time study or student taking voluntary suspension).
- Informing the PGR Funding Team of changes to staffing where it will require removal or granting of access on the PGR Studentship System.
- Advertisement of studentships, once approved (for some Departments/Schools this responsibility will be at Faculty level).

Deputy Associate Principal (DAP) (R&KE)

- Working with the PGR Funding Team to finalise Faculty allocations and launch the SRSS annually.
- Final review and approval of SRSS applications once notified by the PGR Funding Team.
- Chairing annual JARA panel meeting.

Useful Links

- [PGR Studentship System](#)
- [Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations](#)
- [Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Students](#)
- [Pegasus Student Applications](#)
- [PGR Funding Team Portal](#)