



ACCE PLACEMENT SUPPORT

Guidance for students applying for ACCE
DTP placement support

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GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS APPLYING FOR ACCE DTP PLACEMENT SUPPORT

The ACCE DTP placement support scheme provides opportunity and financial assistance for students to undertake 1-3 months of placement. It aims to provide work experience with organisations that may otherwise be unable to take on an intern. Such experience is important both to help early career researchers understand the context of their research and to expose them to the range of opportunities available to them after they graduate.

SUPPORT

The ACCE DTP team will support ACCE DTP students through the process of applying for, securing and completing a placement. Students should keep their supervisors informed at each step of the process; supervisors are required to sign off student's placement application forms and are encouraged to maintain contact with, and where possible, visit their students whilst on placement.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

A placement should be a training or experiential learning opportunity, which offers significant added value to a student's doctoral programme (it should not be a continuation of their research project which could be achieved at their home institution). Placement opportunities should be beneficial to the student, the placement provider and the host University.

WHAT FINANCIAL SUPPORT ACCE CAN PROVIDE?

1. Additional placement funding – stipend and tuition fees (max of 3 months);
2. Travel support – covers travel to/from the location of the placement (details in the table below);
3. Accommodation – covers accommodation if you undertake relocation to the location of the placement (details in the table below);
4. Other occasional expenses, limited to local travel and travel insurance (only in cases where the University Insurance cover needs to be extended).

Students will continue to receive their stipend payment from the DTP as normal during the placement; a suspension of studies is not normally required. Upon returning to their studies after placement completion, students will receive additional stipend for the time that they were on placement.

Students should identify travel/accommodation costs associated with the placement. Wherever possible, an agreement should be made that the placement provider will make a reasonable contribution to any travel & accommodation expenses. The agreement must be made between the student and the placement provider prior to beginning the placement.

Details about the maximum eligible cost are available in the table below:

The maximum claimable budget for travel, accommodation, and other occasional expenses should not exceed **£2,000** for UK based placements (an additional £500 is available for placements in London) and **£4,000** for Overseas placements.

Eligible cost	Details	Max. Claimable amount (3 months) for placements in the UK	Max. Claimable amount (3 months) for Overseas placements
Stipend and fees during placement	Max of 3 months of stipend beyond your original funded period (3.5 years) to cover the period of placement;	£6,005.75 in 2024/25	£6,005.75 in 2024/25
Travel Standard class rail travel; Mileage claimed at local institution rate, Economy air travel, Bus fares, Taxi (where bus not available).	Travel costs can be claimed to (i) get you to your placement location in the first instance (if you are away from your host location) and home again at the end; (ii) cover commuting costs if you chose to stay in your current accommodation, but commute to a different location for the placement. If you move to a new location (and so require accommodation costs), then you would not usually be expected to claim commuting costs since your accommodation should be close enough to your placement.	£2,000 (£2,500 in London)	£4,000
Accommodation	Accommodation at local rates (if moving away from the usual accommodation is required, and in which case daily commute cannot be claimed for).		
Other incurring expenses limited to local travel and travel insurance (only in cases where the University Insurance cover needs to be extended).	Other occasional expenses e.g. travel insurance if you are undertaking an overseas placement.		
	Total max claimable amount per placement	£8,505.75	£10,005.75

PAYMENTS AND CLAIMS

Payments for accommodation and initial travel costs can be arranged in advance of the placement. Students will need to provide appropriate original invoices for costs to be paid by their home University.

All other costs during the period of placement will need to be reimbursed/claimed back via a University of Liverpool payment request form, and students need to provide copies of all

expenses receipts/invoices during the period of placement. Please contact the ACCE DTP team for more details (acce.dtp@liverpool.ac.uk).

TIMEFRAME

Students are eligible to undertake placements up to 3 months full-time. We recommend that students spend this time in a single block with a single host; however, other options are available, including part time placements.

Students should discuss placement timing with their supervisors. There is some flexibility to accommodate the requirements of the host organisation and to avoid disruption to the student's PhD project. We recommend that placements are undertaken between months 12 and 36 of the PhD studentship. Undertaking a placement means that a student's PhD stipend will be extended for the duration of the placement beyond the 3.5 years of their PhD studentship. Student and supervisor need to be aware that this **WILL NOT** extend submission time, the student will still need to submit their PhD at the end of year 4.

WHO CAN STUDENTS DO PLACEMENTS WITH?

Placements can be undertaken with a range of public research organisations (non-academic), NGOs, small-medium enterprises and other private organisations, charities, trusts, local councils, etc. Universities can be eligible as placement providers, as long as the project undertaken does not contribute directly to your PhD work.

When thinking about which organisations to approach, students should consider:

- ❖ Their career aspirations;
- ❖ The skills they want to develop;
- ❖ Opportunities to translate the learning from their studies into the wider world;
- ❖ Practicalities such as the location of the organisation and the feasibility of completing the work within the time requested.

PLACEMENTS IDEAS

The placement should be a well-justified enhancement to the Ph.D. training. It should provide relevant training on subject-specific or generic transferable skills identified in a student's training need analysis or the UK Researcher development framework (<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/rdf-related/researcher-development-framework-rdf-vitae.pdf/view>).

At the same time, it should incentivise genuine engagement with non-academic end users of research. Placements should help students to understand how their research and professional skills can be used in a broad but relevant context.

Placements should ideally be discrete projects, and they must be well planned and managed. They should provide experience at a level appropriate for a postgraduate student. Examples of different types of placements include:

- ❖ Conducting surveys, analysing data and producing reports;
- ❖ Investigating efficiency and cost-saving activity;
- ❖ Managing, delivering a particular service for a certain period;
- ❖ Joining specific teams to assist in the delivery of their activities and projects.

Non-research roles such as:

- ❖ Teaching – in schools, using the Researchers in Residence scheme, or through other mechanisms;
- ❖ Policy – developing policy or working in a related setting, such as a government department, local authority, non-departmental public body, professional association, charity, research funder or medical organisation;
- ❖ Media – a wide variety of roles are possible here that help students understand the wider societal context of their research. Such placements could include working in science communication roles or other roles in a press office, science publishing company, zoo, museum or botanic garden, etc.

CONTACTING POTENTIAL PLACEMENT HOSTS

Students should identify suitable placement host organisations depending on their interests and career aspirations. The best way for a student to secure a placement they are interested in, at a time that suits them, is to take responsibility for securing the placement themselves. This provides the student the opportunity to choose the organisation, and to experience making first contact and negotiating a placement project.

ACCE will circulate relevant placement opportunities as and when we become aware of them (usually via email to all students); alternatively students may wish to check our [placement opportunities webpages](#). As an alternative to contacting potential organisations directly, students can respond to advertised placements at selected organisations.

If a student is approaching the potential placement provider themselves, they should follow these guidelines:

- ❖ When communicating with other organisations, students represent the University that they study at so should be polite and respectful;
- ❖ Individuals that students contact are unlikely to know anything about ACCE DTP and placement support, so they will need to explain it to them. Students can send

them a copy of the documents entitled '[Guidance for hosting a student through ACCE DTP placement support](#)' and the '[ACCE Placement support application form](#)';

- ❖ Students shouldn't focus solely on how the placement will benefit them - instead, they should be prepared to explain why they wish to work for that organisation, outlining the skills and experiences that they can offer. Students can show their enthusiasm by explaining how the placement relates to their career plans and subject of study;
- ❖ Placements can be completed in a way that suits the student and fits in with their studies. Students are eligible for ACCE placement support if they are between month 12 and 36 of their PhD studentship. Timing of the placement should be negotiated with the provider to satisfy these criteria;
- ❖ Students should contact potential placement providers well in advance of when they would like to undertake the placement. It can take months before a suitable placement start date is identified.

INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENTS

Some students may consider undertaking a placement overseas. Where reasonably practicable, the procedures outlined in this document should be followed. It should be noted that work overseas will be subject to the health and safety regulations of the country in question.

TRAVEL ADVICE

Students should seek appropriate travel advice by the DTP partner university they are registered. The DTP partner university is responsible for ensuring students have the appropriate travel documents.

HEALTH ADVICE

Students should seek advice regarding necessary vaccinations, anti-malaria medication, first aid kits, etc. We recommend that anyone travelling overseas should have an appropriately stocked first aid kit. The DTP partner institution is responsible for ensuring students have the appropriate advice on food and water in their placement destination.

INSURANCE

Each DTP partner university is responsible for ensuring students are provided with copies of relevant insurance information and policies.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AN EMPLOYER SHOWS INTEREST IN HOSTING A PLACEMENT?

Once a potential placement provider expresses interest in hosting the placement, the student needs to develop a placement project proposal and must complete the [ACCE Placement support application form](#).

Students should liaise with the placement provider to write the proposal and complete the form. Students are responsible for negotiating the Placement project proposal, timeline, and submission of the application form.

ACCE PLACEMENT SUPPORT APPLICATION PROCEDURE

COMPLETION AND SUBMISSION OF THE ACCE PLACEMENT SUPPORT APPLICATION FORM

ACCE Students are responsible for completing and submitting the ACCE Placement support application form. An electronic copy should be emailed to acce.dtp@liverpool.ac.uk. The form must be signed by the student, the student's lead supervisor, and the Placement provider representative **before** application submission.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS STUDENTS MUST HAVE DURING THEIR PLACEMENT:

1. ACCE Placement Support application form
2. A signed Tripartite Agreement (this document will be signed by you, Placement provider, and by the University hosting your PhD)
3. Health and Safety Employer vetting form (completed by Placement provider); or other relevant University H&S forms
4. Placement report

EVALUATION AND APPROVAL

The ACCE Placement support application form will be evaluated by the ACCE Management Board against agreed criteria and the decision to support or decline the placement project proposal, or request further information, will be sent to the student and their supervisor within three weeks of submission to the board.

AGREEMENT AND CONTRACTING

Once the placement proposal has been approved, students need to inform their hosting University and Department. At this stage, the student's host institution will issue a **Tripartite Agreement** (this document will be signed by the student, their placement provider, and the University hosting the student's PhD). A copy of this agreement template is available from the DTP team.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Each ACCE partner university will check the placement provider's details given in the application form and will provide the relevant H&S forms to complete, where appropriate. Each placement provider is responsible for undertaking the necessary risk assessments and health and safety checks, and for providing the necessary insurance cover or arranging for the student concerned to do so.

REPORTING

Once the student has completed their placement, they need to provide a detailed **placement report** about the project and their achievements. This should be submitted within three months of completing the placement. Please see our [placement report form template](#) at our website.

Placement providers will be contacted separately to provide a short summary of the placement, as part of ACCE monitoring and evaluation of the wider scheme.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IP)/ CONFIDENTIALITY

Each DTP partner institution is responsible for issuing Non-Disclosure Agreements, where required, for their registered students.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTISE

While on placement, students must conduct themselves professionally at all times with an understanding of the standards and expectations of the Placement provider.

Once students have agreed to undertake a placement with a defined Placement Proposal and start and finish dates, they are expected to undertake that placement. It will not be seen as an acceptable professional practice to withdraw from either preliminary or advanced negotiations with an employer for anything other than genuinely unforeseen circumstances.