ACCE+ DLA candidate application form 2026/27 entry - University of Sheffield

Please use this online form to apply for an ACCE+ DLA studentship **at the University of Sheffield** . All details regarding University of Sheffield projects are at: https://accedtp.ac.uk/acce-dla-opportunities-at-university-of-sheffield/

Please do not use this form to apply for a studentship at any of the other ACCE+ DLA partners (York, Liverpool, Natural History Museum (NHM) or National Oceanography Centre (NOC)). Please see the ACCE website for how to apply to a project at these institutions - full details are at: https://accedtp.ac.uk/how-to-apply/.

 Please note that if you wish to apply for projects at more than one institution, you must complete one online form for each institution. You may use this form to apply to University of Sheffield. If you wish to apply for more than one project at University of Sheffield (you may apply to a maximum of two University of Sheffield projects), you must complete one version of this form for each project you apply to.

If you apply to more than two University of Sheffield projects, please note that only the first two projects you apply to will be considered; any further application forms received will not be considered.

About this form:

This form comprises three sections to complete and one information section. Please read all sections and complete all relevant sections.

Section 1 - personal, work and academic details (for completion). Personal details and details of your previous institution of study will not be used as part of the application selection process; they are for information only. Information you give about University highlights and work experience may be used as part of the application selection process.

Section 2 - additional documents you need to submit via email, as well as submitting this application form online. *This section is for your information only. Please note that if you are applying to two University of Sheffield projects, you only need to submit the additional documents required, via email, once.*

Section 3 - project selection details (for completion).

Section 4 - personal statement for the DLA (for completion). These details are used in place of a standard personal statement or cover letter to standardise this part of the application and minimise the difference between those who are given support when applying and those who are not.

Before completing the form, please ensure you read all of the questions - a copy of all questions is available in .pdf form on the ACCE website (https://accedtp.ac.uk/how-to-apply/). Please do not complete the .pdf form as your application as it will not be accepted. You do not need to submit a separate CV and personal statement/cover letter as part of your application. Any CVs/personal statements/cover letters received will not be used as part of the selection process.

A pre-recorded candidate information session, made by the primary supervisors of each project available for this round, will be available for you to view from the beginning of December 2025. Please register for a copy of the presentation/view the presentation for each project at our website [link]. A Frequently Asked Questions document for each project will also be available at our website from the beginning of December 2025 [link].

The closing date for applications is **5.00pm (UK time)** on **Wednesday 7th January 2026**.

If any part of your application submission is missing, your application may be rejected.
When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

* Indicates required question

Section 1 - personal, work and academic details

1. Full name (first name and surname) *

_____

2. Email address (please enter one email address only) *

3. Nationality *

4. Country of birth *

5. Country of permanent residence *

6. Length of current residence (please enter "from birth" if appropriate) *

7. **Previous University name #1 (most recent)** *

8. Name of qualification obtained or to be obtained *

9. Start date of course *

Example: January 7, 2019

10. Completion date (if completed)

Example: January 7, 2019

11. Degree classification/percentage/GPA/grade (obtained or achieved to date) *

12. Please note briefly any highlights from your degree (max 150 words). Please do not note the name of your institution of study in this description.   *

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13. **Previous University name #2**

_____

14. Name of qualification obtained or to be obtained

_____

15. Start date

_____

Example: January 7, 2019

16. Completion date (if completed)

Example: January 7, 2019

17. Degree classification/percentage/GPA/grade (obtained or achieved to date)

18. Please note briefly any highlights from your degree (max 150 words). Please do not note the name of your institution of study in this description.

19. **Previous University name #3**

20. Name of qualification obtained or to be obtained

_____

21. Start date

_____

Example: January 7, 2019

22. Completion date (if completed)

_____

Example: January 7, 2019

23. Degree classification/percentage/GPA/grade (obtained or achieved to date)

_____

24. Please note briefly any highlights from your degree (max 150 words). Please do not note the name of your institution of study in this description.

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25. **Work highlights**. Please note here any highlights from previous academic work or employment (paid or voluntary) that you would like to tell us about (max 200 words). Please do not note the name of your institution of study in this description.

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26. **English Language Qualifications.** Is English your first language? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes

◯ No

27. Have you completed an academic qualification in the UK or equivalent to a UK degree which was taught in a majority   *
English-speaking country?

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes

◯ No

28. Do you hold a SELT **(non-UK nationals only)**? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes

◯ No

29. If yes, please provide the following details: SELT/overall score/test date/listening score/reading score:

30. Please note any other English language qualification you hold, including test date/grade or score achieved

31. Has your Bachelor/Master degree been taught in English? *

Mark only one oval.

  ◯ Yes

  ◯ No

32. Have you studied all or part of your Bachelor/Master degree in the UK? *

Mark only one oval.

⚪ Yes

⚪ No

33. If yes, please note length of time studying in the UK

_____

34. **Passport and visa information.** Please note your passport country of issue *

_____

35. Do you require a visa to study in the UK? *

Mark only one oval.

⚪ Yes

⚪ No

36. Have you previously studied in the UK using a Tier 4 (general) student visa? If so, please provide the issue and expiry dates

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37. Do you have the following status (please select if applicable). Details of UKRI's guidance on student eligibility are in   *
Annex B of this document: https://www.ukri.org/publications/terms-and-conditions-for-training-funding/ukri-training-grant-guidance/#section-annex-b:-international-eligibility-criteria-for-ukri-funded-studentships-

Mark only one oval.

◯ Settled status in the UK

◯ Pre-settled status in the UK

◯ Indefinite leave to remain or enter the UK

◯ I am a British citizen

◯ None of the above

38. **Referees.** Please note that only referee contact details are required at this time. References will be requested by the *
ACCE+ DLA administration team only for candidates invited to an interview. Please do not provide full references from
your referees at this stage. Please provide your **first referee**'s full name

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39. Please provide your referee's title *

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40. Please provide your referee's employer (e.g. their University or workplace) *

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41. Please provide your referee's job title/position *

42. Please provide your referee's email address *

43. Please provide your **second referee**'s name *

44. Please provide your referee's title *

45. Please provide your referee's employer (e.g. their University or workplace) *

46.   Please provide your referee's job title/position *

47.   Please provide your referee's email address *

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Section 2. Further details of information required

In addition to the information in this form, please submit supporting documents as follows to University of Sheffield via email (email: linda.harris@sheffield.ac.uk.harris@sheffield.ac.uk). Please use the email subject line: *ACCE+ DLA application [insert your full name]* so we can match your email submission to your online form submission. Please ensure you use exactly the same first name and surname on this form and on your email. All supporting documents should also be submitted by **5.00pm (UK time)** on **Wednesday 7th January 2026.**

Please note that if you are applying to two University of Sheffield projects, you only need to submit the additional documents required, via email, one.

If any part of your application submission is missing, your application may be rejected.

Supporting documents required:

- Your first (undergraduate) degree full or partial transcript
- Your first (undergraduate) degree final certificate (if obtained)
- Any subsequent relevant degree full or partial transcript
- Any subsequent relevant degree final certificate (if obtained)
- A copy of your passport's photo page
- If relevant, your current English language certificate (normally TOEFL or IELTS).

Please submit your documents in the following format only: Each document should be submitted as a separate attachment and should be named as follows: *[candidate name - [document]]; f*or example: *Jones, Jamie - Bachelor transcript; Jones, Jamie - Bachelor certificate.*

- Please submit .pdf documents where possible.
- Do not submit photos of certificates.
- Do not combine documents into one single .pdf.

Applications not meeting these criteria may be rejected.

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Section 3. Project choices.
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48. **Project choice**: please select from the options below *

Mark only one oval.

- Dr Nicola Hemmings - Can microrefugia buffer threatened species from climate change?
- Prof Colin Osborne - Climate change impacts in grasslands: from Australia to the world
- Prof Gareth Phoenix - Small size, big impact: the importance of mosses and lichens in arctic ecosystem function
- Dr Thomas Guillerme - How do global and climate-driven migrations affect local functional diversity?
- Dr Luke Dunning - Detecting rapid evolutionary responses to climate change in UK plants
- Dr Alison Wright - The impact of climate change on sexually selected traits and its consequences for evolutionary fitness
- Dr Maria Val Martin - Assessing the role of upland fires in air pollution and public health in the UK
- Prof Rob Freckleton - Uncovering the drivers of diversity in tropical savanna forests
- Dr Jeremy Ely - Wetlands within water towers: How will bofedales respond to climate change?
- Dr Robert Bryant - Assessing the extent and drivers of illegal Selective Logging across Peru
- Dr Ellie Harrison - Engineering underground ecosystems for sustainable legume production
- Prof Gavin Thomas - Assessing the Future Effectiveness of Spatial Conservation Networks in tetrapods
- Dr Andrew Sole - Quantifying water storage beneath the Greenland Ice Sheet and its influence on ice dynamics and runoff
- Prof Jon Slate - The inheritance of phenotypic plasticity in a wild mammal
- Dr Karl Evans - Changing contributions of gardens for wildlife and ecosystem services- causes, consequences and solutions
- Prof Dylan Childs - Landscape-scale drivers and limits of endangered species spatial and temporal distribution

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Section 4. Personal statement for the DLA

This section provides guidance for the personal statement/supporting statement/cover letter segment of the application. It has been designed to take the guesswork out of our application system, ensuring that all applicants provide details of the key criteria we use for assessing applications. We seek to recruit students with the potential to thrive in a PhD training environment, regardless of what opportunities may have been available to them and what barriers they may have faced. We recognise that there is no one way to identify talent and commitment, so our application system is designed to embrace this diversity, and to empower you to put your best self forward.

By following this five-question format, this takes the place of the personal statement/supporting statement/cover letter in your application. To understand more about the ACCE application process and to support you in your application we have put together an online guide. Please see our webpage at: https://accedtp.ac.uk/how-to-apply/ for more information.

Please ensure that you do not note your previous institution/s of study in the below questions and that the answers are anonymous (i.e. you don't include identifying details such as your name) as far as possible.

Please answer the questions below and note the word counts.

49. **What inspires you about the project or projects you have applied for? (max 300 words).** Outline your interest in *
your chosen project/s. Consider telling us about your interest in the subject, the approach the project takes and/or why
the supervisor/department are good choices for pursuing the topic.

50. **Describe how your skill set matches any skills required for the project/s and the general skills required for a** *
PhD (max 300 words). If you don't currently have a specific skill, please describe with examples your aptitude to learn
new skills (max 300 words). This should include: academic skills/experience relevant to your chosen project/s;
academic skills/experience relevant to a PhD in general; transferable skills/experience from your non-academic life
that you will draw upon during a PhD.

51. **Please describe up to three examples that show your commitment to science (max 450 words).** There are many *
ways to demonstrate your passion, determination and commitment to your pursuit of science. We want to hear about
any ways you have gone out of your way to get to the point you are at now. For example, working to fund your studies
demonstrates work ethic, adaptability, and perseverance in achieving your goals. Other examples of this could be:
contributing to the department/university/employment culture or outreach projects, co-authoring a publication,
contributing to equality and diversity work, obtaining grant funding, taking on vacation lab or field projects, overcoming
significant life hurdles to complete your studies, or choosing research-based or relevant jobs such as technical roles.
This is not an exhaustive list; we are interested in any relevant examples.

52. **Tell us about a recent piece of science that excited you. If you could repeat it, how would you do it differently?** *
(max 300 words). Here you should outline: - One project that you led, were involved in, or just another person's science that excited you (e.g. based on a paper).- Why was it important?- What were the hypotheses and why were they chosen?- What were the findings and how are they relevant to the wider field?- If you could repeat the study, how would you improve it, and what did this teach you about doing scientific research?

53. **Is there anything else you would like to tell us that can help to frame your application? (no word limit).** All students experience different challenges throughout their careers, leading to different opportunities and outcomes. We take an evidence-based approach that recognises that for many reasons - such as belonging to a marginalised group (racial, LQBTQI, disability, gender, or beyond), having caring responsibilities, financial disadvantage, being the first in your family to attend university, suffering significant illness or bereavement, and so on - a student's potential is not always accurately reflected in grades. We therefore invite you to frame your application in a context that best reflects you. *

Google Forms