

STFC Education, Training and Careers news

The [Education, Training and Careers Committee](#) (ETCC) met on 16 March 2017. The main items on the agenda were the research and innovation talent fund, PhD submission policy, Studentship algorithm, Balance of Skills Programme, Fellowship process, Brexit, ETCC Terms of Reference, Fellowship Questionnaires, Studentship Survey and CASE studentship closing date.

Research and innovation talent fund

The Chancellor's Budget statement included potential additional funding for studentships and fellowships linked to the Government's industrial strategy. Across the Research Councils, there were an additional 1000 PhD places to start in 2017, 85% of them in STEM subjects and 40% involving industrial partnerships. The Committee discussed how STFC could position itself for and make use of additional funding.

PhD submission policy

STFC has consulted with departments on proposed changes to the way it adjusts studentship allocations according to PhD submission rates. In light of the feedback received from the 30 departments who responded to the consultation, ETCC will examine further statistics on different lengths of PhDs by discipline and department and hold further discussions at its next meeting in June.

Studentship algorithm

Departments were notified of their [allocations](#) of studentships starting in October 2017 on 21 December 2016. Allocations for 2018 starters will be announced towards the end of 2017. Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship holders will be included in the algorithm calculations when it is next run in 2018. The Committee also discussed whether, in the next algorithm exercise, there should be a cap on the amount of FEC time counted for individual academic staff. There will be further discussion on this point.

Balance of Skills Programme

A review of the balance of funding across the STFC skills programme is now taking place. For the purpose of the review, STFC's skills programme is defined as formal, funded training and engagement schemes in the following skills areas; public engagement, apprenticeships, graduate trainees, studentships, fellowships. ETCC discussed the input it might wish to make to the review.

Ernest Rutherford Fellowships

The 2016/17 round of the Ernest Rutherford Fellowships scheme has now been completed and all 12 of the successful candidates have accepted the offer of a Fellowship. One Returner Fellowship has also been offered and accepted a Fellowship.

ETCC reviewed the operation of the scheme and recommended adding an item on gender balance at the sift meeting; changing the tick box on the CV from 'Remaining at current organisation for personal reasons' to 'Is your choice of institution due to personal reasons'; and providing more reviewer guidance. It also recommended that, from the 2018 call onwards, applications that did not conform to the specific guidelines should be rejected.

Brexit

STFC has set up a Brexit working group which is undertaking fact-finding and analysis. A survey of STFC PPAN supported departments will be carried out both of H2020 funding and numbers of Non-UK EU nationals' employees, to better understand the potential financial exposure and impact of possible changes to the current immigration policy.

WiSET

Following the cessation of the operation of the Women in Science, Engineering and Technology group ETCC will advise on equality and diversity issues until any new body charged with this responsibility is established.

Analysis of Fellowship Questionnaires

STFC has analysed the questionnaires of fellows who had completed their fellowship. The key findings and aggregate data of questionnaires received since 2006 are published on our [Fellowship webpage](#).

Student Survey

STFC has analysed the data from the annual student survey carried out in 2016. The students targeted in the exercise were those who undertook their PhD during the years 2012 – 2016. The key findings are published on our [Student Questionnaire webpage](#).

CASE Studentships

The [Industrial CASE](#) closing date has been moved to 5 October 2017. It is hoped that the shorter lead time will be helpful, especially to non-academic partners.