

**2022 Cohort Application Form Guidance Notes**

**Deadline: Please speak to the University at which you would like to study**

The Techne application form has sections to be completed by

* the student
* the lead supervisor
* the referees
* the University Techne Administrator

**Guidance for Students**

**Introduction**

Studentships from Techne are only available to students applying through one of the nine Universities in the Techne consortium. You may apply through only one university.

Please note that this document does not describe how to apply to the Universities, you will need to contact the University at which you wish to study to find information about their application process and deadlines.

The Techne contacts at each of the 9 Universities are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **University** | **University *Techne* Administrator** | **Email** |
| **University of Brighton** | Fiona Sutton | f.j.sutton@brighton.ac.uk  |
| **Brunel University** | Emma Smith | Emma.smith@brunel.ac.uk  |
| **Kingston University** | Rachel Graham | rachel.graham@kingston.ac.uk  |
| **Loughborough London** | Bryony Stewart-Seume | b.stewart-seume@lboro.ac.uk  |
| **Roehampton University** | Miles Purcell | techne@roehampton.ac.uk  |
| **Royal Holloway** | Ally Williams | technerhul@rhul.ac.uk |
| **Surrey University** | Kate Smith | k.smith@surrey.ac.uk  |
| **University of the Arts** | Jane Nobbs | researchdegrees@arts.ac.uk  |
| **Westminster University** | Richard McCormack | R.Mccormack@westminster.ac.uk |

**General Notes for Students**

* It is your responsibility to complete the application. You should keep in regular contact with anyone providing information (supervisors, referees, administrators) to ensure that all parts are completed and submitted by the deadline specified by the University at which you wish to study. Incomplete applications will not be progressed.
* Wherever possible questions should be addressed to your University contact in the first instance; if this is not possible then please contact Techne Administration at techne@rhul.ac.uk
* Note that if you are successful, certain information disclosed on the application form will be shared with the UKRI/AHRC, and the AHRC will publish information drawn from the application form about you, the research project and supervisors on the ‘Gateway to Research’ web-based portal.
* You will also need to apply (separately) to your chosen University for a place on their PhD programme and have been accepted as a student prior to your application being formally submitted to Techne.

**Preparing your application**

* We recommend that you read the Application Assessment Criteria, which are provided at the end of these notes.
* You should seek advice from the University at which you would like to study, in order to identify a supervisory team, your future training needs, and how best to describe your proposed research.
* You will need scans of your Degree Transcripts or Certificates (as complete as are available) to attach to your application.
* You will need to supply 2 references. You should choose your referees carefully. Together they should have a good knowledge of your academic record to date and your plans for the research project. They should be in a position to judge your suitability and preparedness for doctoral study. Only one of your two referees can be a member of your proposed (or actual) supervisory team. You may ask the supervisor of your Masters’ dissertation to be one of your referees. If you have already started your PhD, we would expect one of your references to be from one of your supervisors.

**Using the Portal**

* Please check with your University at what stage they wish you to complete an online application on the Portal.
* The Portal is available at <https://techne.flexigrant.com>. The Portal must be used to apply to Techne, it may also be used by your chosen University selection process that precedes formal submission to Techne.
* You can save your partially completed application form on the Portal and print or create a PDF of your application at any stage.
* Only material submitted via the Portal will be considered by Techne. Additional items (such as a covering letter or a CV) will not be reviewed.

**Guidance for Students on each question when completing the online application:**

**01: Will your research be in one of the Techne subject areas?**

Use the drop-down lists to check that your area of research is included (this follows the AHRC classification system in Appendix B.

**02: Do you have a Masters’ Degree?**

To be eligible for a Techne studentship, you must normally have a Masters or equivalent in a relevant discipline before you start your PhD. You may apply before you have completed your Masters. You should also have an undergraduate degree.

If you do not have a Master’s but do have other suitable qualifications or experience, then you can still apply. In this case your Supervisor will be required to confirm this in the Supervisors section of the application.

**03: The University where you will be studying**

Note that you may only apply through one Techne University for a studentship.

**04: Are you a home student or international student?**

Your University will be asked to confirm to Techne that you are eligible for the studentship you are applying for and may ask you for documentation to confirm your residency status, full information on [UKRI residency requirements can be found on their website](https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-121020-Guidance-International-Eligibility-Implementation-training-grant-holders.pdf).

To be classed as a home student, candidates must meet the following criteria:

* Be a UK/Irish 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 candidate does not meet the criteria above, they would be classed as an International student.

**Home Fees and Maintenance comprises:**

Your University tuition fees paid at the rate for home students. These are paid in full directly to your University, you will not be required to pay anything towards your fees.

A tax-free maintenance stipend to pay your living costs. This is currently set at £15,609 per year. For those studying at Universities based in London, there is an additional £2,000 per year paid as London Weighting, reflecting the higher cost of living in London. (Note that you will not receive the London Weighting payment if you choose to live in London whilst studying at a University outside London).

**International student Fees and Maintenance comprises:**

Your University tuition fees will be paid up to the rate of a home student, applicants may be asked to pay the balance between the home fee award and the international fee charged by their home institution, please contact your Techne administrator to check the position.

A tax-free maintenance stipend to pay your living costs. This is currently set at £15609 per year. For those studying at Universities based in London, there is an additional £2,000 per year paid as London Weighting, reflecting the higher cost of living in London. (Note that you will not receive the London Weighting payment if you choose to live in London whilst studying at a University outside London).

**05: Your Contact details**

Please provide contact details. The “Alternative details” are optional, for use where you might prefer us to use different contact addresses at different times.

By providing this information, you consent to Techne sharing your email address with the AHRC/UKRI via the Student Data Portal (Je-S) if you are awarded a studentship.

**06: Professional experience relevant to this application**

Provide information about any employment, work or professional experience (research and /or practice-based) that is relevant to your proposed programme of study and will therefore strengthen your application.

**07: Undergraduate Degree(s)**

If you have more than one qualification at the same level, please provide details of each. Please upload certificates and transcripts (as complete as are available).

**08: Masters’ Degree(s)**

If you have more than one qualification at the same level, please provide details of each and also include qualifications that you are currently studying for, uploading both transcripts and certificates (as complete as are available).

**09: Other qualifications (e.g. PGCE, PhD)**

Please include any other relevant qualifications obtained or being studied.

**10: Period of Funding**

Please indicate whether you will be studying Full-time or Part-time. The period of Part-time is calculated at 50%. Please discuss with your supervisor which mode is most suitable for you.

The funding period is made up:

1. Basic core study: 3 years full time (or 6 years part time)
2. Preparing for submission: 6 months full time (or 1 year part time)

**10a: Funding period PhD not started**

 Please indicate if you are applying for full time or part time.

**10b: Funding period for PhD already started**

To be eligible for Techne funding, you must have at least 50% of your PhD period remaining at the point when the funding starts (1st October). This is calculated on the basis of a 3.5-year study period, you will need to have 21 months remaining. For Part time based on a 7-year study period at 50% you will need to have 42 months remaining.

You are asked to provide an explanation of why you are seeking funding for a PhD that you have already started – for example because you have been studying part-time whilst working part-time and now wish to study full time with a studentship, or because you started your PhD part way through an academic year.

Please enter the total number of months you are applying for.

**Note that all students are expected to submit within their period of funding regardless of the length of the funding period.**

**11: Research Project Description**

You should discuss the content of this section with your proposed supervisor(s). The Techne assessment process will look for evidence of high quality and strong potential for doctoral study (evidence of feasibility, intellectual purpose and originality, reasons for undertaking your proposed study, appropriateness of approach, awareness of the research context, etc.).

If your application is successful, then the Title and Synopsis will be used on the Techne website and in reporting to the AHRC.

**11a: Title**

Please use a maximum of 20 words.

**11b: Synopsis**

Please write for a general (i.e. non-specialist) audience, and use no more than 300 words.

**11c: Description**

Use clear and concise language, avoiding jargon. Bear in mind that the Techne reviewers assessing your application will not all be experts in your particular specialist field.

Describe the proposed research in terms of the following:

Your research questions and why they are important or relevant. What contribution to knowledge will be made? What will be the outcomes of your research?

Your knowledge of the subject area including key literature, people, and recent findings.

Methods and approaches that will be used.

Research plan, timetable and challenges.

If your research project is interdisciplinary, you should indicate your current level of expertise in the relevant disciplines. There is no expectation that you will be fully expert in all relevant disciplines, but Techne will assess whether it is feasible for you to acquire any necessary new methodological knowledge and understanding in the time available.

The word limit for this section is 1200 words. Note that it is not possible to enter formatting such as bold or italics in the Portal, only plain text. Applicants will not be penalised for failing to use italics in referencing.

**11d: Bibliographic References**

Please insert bibliographic references here rather than using footnotes in 11c. Please enter no more than 20 references.

**11e: Website links**

Optionally provide up to four links to websites with images/audio/film that support your application. Be aware that Techne reviewers have strict deadlines to complete their assessment of your application, and therefore will have limited time to review linked material.

**12: Are you applying for a Collaborative Doctoral Award?**

Please indicate here if you have been previously notified that you are a Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) applicant. If so, you will be asked to list the partner organisations here.

**13: Resources required**

Please describe any study trips, facilities, access to libraries, archives or similar, which are integral to your research. This will enable Techne reviewers to determine whether these can be provided or supported. This information may also be passed on to Techne Partner organisations if appropriate.

Note that Techne cannot guarantee availability or access to the resources you have identified. Note also that if your studentship is approved, it does not necessarily mean that Techne will fund expenses associated with accessing the resources you identify here.

**14: Additional Training needs**

You are advised to discuss this section with your proposed supervisor(s).

This section will be used to inform the cross-institutional training which Techne coordinates. Therefore you do not need to list on this application the training that will be provided as standard at your University.

Please give an indication of the training needs for both support of your research project and for development of your future career, and outline how and where you plan to undertake it.

**15: Student Personal Statement**

Please explain why you have chosen to put forward an application to Techne. You might outline how you would take advantage of the training and development opportunities and what you might contribute to your fellow Techne students. You could also describe how your proposal fits with the Techne philosophy (www.techne.ac.uk) and what you see as the benefits of working in a Doctoral Training Partnership context.

**16: Equal Opportunities Monitoring**

Both Techne and the AHRC are committed to ensuring that students are selected on the basis of merit. Completion of the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form will help us to ensure that our policies and procedures are effective in avoiding discrimination and promoting equal opportunities in awarding studentships. Your answers will be used to evaluate the effective operation of our Equal Opportunities Policy and to report (anonymously) to the AHRC.

**Your answers will not affect your application in any way. The information will not be seen by Techne reviewers, your referees or potential supervisors.**

We have made this section mandatory because providing equal opportunity is important to us. If you prefer not to disclose this type of information, you are given the option on each question to state this.

Please check with your University Techne administrator – they may wish you to leave this page blank until you have provided them with a PDF of your application form.

**17: Student’s declaration**

This is the final page of your personal information. By inserting your name as your signature and the date declaring that the information you have provided is complete and accurate to the best of your knowledge.

**18 & 19: Nominating your Referees and Supervisor**

Your application must be supported by two references and your lead supervisor. You should choose your two referees carefully. Together they should have a good knowledge of your academic record to date and your plans for the research project. They should be in a position to judge your suitability and preparedness for doctoral study. Only one of your two referees can be a member of your proposed (or actual) supervisory team. You may ask the supervisor of your Masters dissertation to be one of your referees. It is however not necessary for either of your referees to be a member of your supervisory team unless you have already started your PhD, in which case we would expect one of your references to be from your supervisor.

There are three options for referees, you can use different options for each of your referees.

1. You can use the portal to request your referees to supply their references. The portal will immediately send an email to each of the referees requesting them upload or type in their reference.
2. If you already have the references, you can mark referees in the portal as “Not required” and attach references yourself at the end of question 17.
3. Your University Techne administrator can attach the references (e.g. if they are the same as used for the university admissions process), then you can mark referees in the portal as “Not required”.

Your supervisor must be agreed by your University. There are two options for the supervisor:

1. Your University Techne administrator can invite the supervisor
2. You can invite the supervisor (after checking with the administrator)

If you are going to nominate referees and/or the supervisor, then you will need to select “Return to Summary” and then select the ‘Participants’ tab as highlighted in the screenshot below:



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**Guide to the Assessment Process**

Applications will be assessed firstly by selection panels in the University to which the student has applied. This process is defined by the University. Students will be informed by early February by the University whether they have been successful in the first stage of the competition and whether their application will go forward to Techne. [NB: This stage does not apply to CDA students, who are selected in a separate process].

Applications shortlisted for submission to Techne must be **completed and submitted on the Techne Portal as indicated by your chosen institution**.

The Techne assessment is performed as follows:

1. **Subject Group review Peer Review** – Peer Review scoring
2. **Subject Group Moderation** – Application scoring moderated by a Subject Group comprising two representatives from each University with an interest in related disciplines.
3. **Management Group review** - The final review and ranking of all applications.

Studentships are awarded for the best applications, regardless of subject area or University.

Students will be sent an offer by Techne administration in April if they have been successful. Acceptance will be requested by a specified date; if no answer is received by that date it will be assumed that the offer has been declined. Note that the offer is also dependent on the student completing registration at their Techne member university.

Note that in line with an agreement between DTPs, students cannot hold more than one AHRC DTP offer at a time, so if a student receiving a Techne offer already holds an offer from another DTP, they must decline one of the offers.

**Application Assessment Criteria**

|  | **Quality of student**  **33%** | **Quality of Proposal****33%** | **Feasibility of Proposal****33%** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Assessment criteria:* Past academic achievement
* Contribution of academic and professional experience to preparedness for doctoral study
* How doctoral study will contribute to long term career aims

As evidenced in 06 Professional Experience,07 – 09 Higher Education15 Personal Statement18 Reference 119 Reference 227 Other Supervision Points | Assessment criteria:* Ideas underpinning the proposal
* Concept and design of research
* Fit of the project with the *Techne* philosophy

As evidenced in 11 Research Project Description13 Resources required15 Personal Statement27 Other Supervision Points | Assessment criteria :* Coherence and quality of research plan
* Feasibility of research being completed in the timeframe
* Advancement of work in the current field
* Potential impact
* Expertise of potential supervisors
* Feasibility of necessary training, fieldwork or study trips

As evidenced in 11 Research Project Description13 Resources required14 Additional Training Needs 20 - 24 Supervisory Team25 Recommended Further Training26 Ethical Issues27 Other Supervision Points |
| **Score** |  |  |  |
| **6** | A student of outstanding quality, who is outstandingly well prepared to undertake the proposed postgraduate study.  | An outstanding proposal in all of the following: studentship, originality, quality, significance and openness to diverse approaches. It provides full and consistent evidence and justification for the proposal in terms of concept and design. The proposal merits the very highest priority for funding. | The research plan is coherent, clear and convincing and the project has strong potential for impact. The project will significantly advance work in the current field and is undoubtedly capable of timely completion. There is an excellent fit between the project and the expertise of the supervisors. Resourcing of training or fieldwork is unproblematic. |
| **5** | A student of excellent quality, who is exceptionally well prepared to undertake the proposed postgraduate study.  | An excellent proposal in all of the following: studentship, originality, quality, significance and openness to diverse approaches. It provides full and consistent evidence and justification for the proposal. The proposal should be funded as a matter of priority, but does not merit the very highest priority rating. | The research plan is coherent, clear and convincing and the project has strong potential for impact. The project will advance work in the current field and is capable of timely completion. There is a good fit between the project and the expertise of the supervisors. . Resourcing of training or fieldwork is unproblematic |
| **4** | A student of good quality, who is well prepared to undertake the proposed postgraduate study. | A very good proposal in all of the following: studentship, originality, quality, significance and openness to diverse approaches. It provides very good evidence and justification for the proposal. It is worthy of consideration for funding. | The research plan is coherent, clear and convincing and the project has some potential for impact. The project will advance work in the current field and is capable of timely completion. There is an adequate fit between the project and the expertise of the supervisors. Resourcing of training or fieldwork is unproblematic. |
| **3** | A student of satisfactory quality, who is prepared to undertake the proposed postgraduate study. | A satisfactory proposal in terms of the overall standard of studentship and quality but which is more limited in terms of originality, significance, its contribution to the research field or openness to diverse approaches. In a competitive context the proposal is not considered of a sufficient quality to recommend for funding. | The research plan is adequate. The project may advance work in the current field and it may be possible to complete it within the timeframe. There is an adequate fit between the project and the expertise of the supervisors. Resourcing of training or fieldwork may present some problems. |
| **2** | The quality of the student is inconsistent. The student may be of insufficient quality or may not be well prepared to undertake and complete the proposed postgraduate study. | A proposal of inconsistent quality which has some strengths, innovative ideas and/or good components or dimensions but also has significant weaknesses or flaws in one or more of the following: conceptualisation, design, methodology. As a result of the flaws or weaknesses identified, the proposal is not considered to be of fundable quality. | There are significant weaknesses or flaws in the management of the project and it would be unlikely to be completed within the timeframe or to advance work in the field. The fit between the project and supervisors is inadequate. Resourcing of training or fieldwork is likely to be problematic. |
| **1** | A student of an unsatisfactory quality who is not well prepared to undertake and complete the proposed postgraduate study. | A proposal of an unsatisfactory quality which:* Has unsatisfactory levels of originality, quality and/or significance
* Contains insufficient evidence and justification for the proposal
* Displays limited potential to advance the research field

It is not suitable for funding. | The project is unconvincing in terms of its management or capacity to deliver the proposed outcomes or its contribution to the field. The fit between the project and supervisors is inadequate. Resourcing of training or fieldwork is likely to be problematic. |