

AHRC DTP Carers Policy

1. Introduction

This Policy provides advice and guidance for:

- Doctoral researchers at the DTP who, at any point during their PhD programme, provide emotional or practical support to partners, children and other family members, friends, neighbours or others who are unable to manage alone.
- Supervisory staff and/or those who have a role in advising or supporting doctoral researchers who already are or who anticipate having carer responsibilities.

The policy covers any current or prospective doctoral researcher who has sole or shared responsibility for a partner, relative, close friend or neighbour because they are ill, have a disability, are experiencing mental distress or affected by substance abuse. We recognise that the need for care can often be short or long term, and that the responsibility for emotional or practical support may occur at any point and may not be predictable or have a set timescale.

2. Policy Statement

The DTP believes that caring should not prevent doctoral researchers from succeeding in their studies. Through our values of respect, integrity, creativity and collaboration, we enrich the many contributions made to our culture and society by doctoral researchers across our member HEIs. We are committed to providing support and flexibility to facilitate their success, ensuring that no one is disadvantaged whilst safeguarding academic standards.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all doctoral researchers registered at the DTP.

The scope of this policy does not include on-going day to day parental responsibilities, unless for a disabled child, or any caring responsibilities as part of a voluntary placement or where payment is received. The policy focuses primarily on the responsibility of caring and the impact on study-related matters.

Out of pocket carer costs beyond that required to meet the normal contracted requirements of the PhD programme (for example, cohort conferences, training events), may be requested. Carer costs associated with normal /flexible working patterns or for extended periods of fieldwork may not be sought. Childcare costs (over and above normal childcare costs (i.e. for evening / weekend events) can be covered. As with other expenses, documentary evidence is required before expenses are processed.

There is no qualifying period for carers support. We will ensure that our training provisions and opportunities provide protection from discrimination for carers. The degree of flexibility that may be offered will be affected by each doctoral researcher's relative HEI, however all will follow the general approach set out in this document.

4. Terminology

Carers are defined as those who provide support to children and family members, other relatives, partners, friends and neighbours of any age affected by physical or mental illness (long and short term), disability, frailty or substance misuse. The cared-for person may have more than one condition. Some carers care for shorter periods or are life-long carers. Carers do not need to be living with the cared-for person to be a carer. Anybody can become a carer at any time, sometimes for more than one person. ¹

5. Support for Carers

A range of university policies can be used to help students and staff who need support with caring responsibilities either on a short- or longer-term basis. We would ask doctoral researchers to consult with their own HEI in the first instance about what support may be available.

The DTP can provide a small budget to fund out of pocket expenses incurred by attending programmes offered by the DTP that impact usual caring responsibilities. The key aspect is that there is a payment to a registered third party. Please note that we will not be able to make the specific care arrangement for you. Applications will be accepted throughout the year. Payment will be made by way of an expense claim form with receipts attached.

For compulsory activities run by the DTP, such as required employability placements or whole-cohort training events, full additional costs will be covered.

For optional activities run by the DTP, where these are run and therefore fully funded by the DTP, the contribution method is appropriate up to a defined limit (approx. £100).

For activities that are not organised by the DTP, no contribution can be made.

6. How to Apply

Please send an email request using your academic email address with 'CARER APPLICATION' in the subject header to admin@sgsah.ac.uk. We recommend at least one month's notice if possible. The DTP will aim to inform you of a decision within 2 working weeks.

In order to apply we will require the following information:-

- Details of the event/s you wish to attend: what, where, when, why
- Details of the support you require, and your proposed provider of that support
- Details of additional carer costs associated with attending the event/s.

Costs will be reimbursed following the event.

7. Confidentiality

SGSAH will protect all personal information and treat it in the strictest confidence. Information will only be shared if a person consents to disclosure or there is a statutory or other legal requirement.

Principals of Confidentiality

- Justify the purpose(s) for asking for and using confidential information.
- We will not use confidential information unless it is absolutely necessary
- We will use minimum necessary personal identifiable information
- Access to confidential information should be on a strict need-to-know basis
- Everyone with access to confidential information should be aware of their responsibilities
- We will comply with the law

¹ As described in [Caring Together: The Carers Strategy for Scotland 2010 - 2015](#)

8. Useful information

[Caring Together: The Carers Strategy for Scotland 2010 - 2015](#)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/carers-strategic-policy-statement-draft-consultation/>

<https://www.carersuk.org/>