Please read these guidance notes before submitting your SeNSS application and, in particular, note the following:

1. You do not need to have a Masters degree to apply. If you have equivalent professional experience or an undergraduate degree plus relevant professional experience, you may be eligible for an award.

2. All studentships are offered on a full- or part-time basis, and on a three-year or four-year basis.

3. There are **four stages to making a SeNSS application**: a) check your eligibility (see p.6-7, below); b) if eligible, apply to your chosen university for a postgraduate place; c) discuss your application with your supervisor and, if they are supportive, then; d) apply for a SeNSS studentship.

4. The deadline for applying to your chosen university for a postgraduate place is **12.00 GMT on 20 January 2020**. We strongly advise you to apply several weeks before this to allow sufficient time to complete the four stages above.

   Once you have applied to your university, you must apply for SeNSS ESRC funding. This deadline differs for each of the ten SeNSS member institutions. Click [here](#) to view these deadlines.

5. In order to submit an application, you must:
   a. Discuss this with your proposed supervisor, who will be required to complete a statement of support for your application;
   b. Discuss your application with your two referees, who will need to submit supporting references;
   c. Contact your chosen university’s [administrative lead](#), who will provide you with the password to access FluidReview (our online application system) to create your application;
   d. Complete the online application. Print outs and other forms of the application will not be accepted; and,
   e. Read the criteria on p.14, as your application will be judged according to these criteria.
6. You are only permitted to submit ONE application for a student-led studentship beginning in 2020. However, there is no limit on the number of supervisor-led studentship applications you can make, provided you are eligible for each of these. For further information, click here.

7. Please note that your university will ask you to attend an interview in respect of your application for a PhD place, and/or your application for a SeNSS studentship.
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THE APPLICATION FORM

There are four forms to be completed:

1) The personal information form;
2) The personal details form;
3) The application form; and,
4) The Equal Opportunities form.

Because the forms must cover various scenarios (for example, whether you are a Home or EU student, whether you are studying for a +3, a 1+3, a 2+2 or a +4 etc.), you will be directed to different questions depending on your answers to these questions. Where this occurs, we indicate this with highlighted text.

1. COMPLETING THE PERSON INFORMATION FORM

This very brief form must be completed at the beginning of the application process, as we are required by law to ask your permission to collect your personal information.

2. COMPLETING THE PERSONAL DETAILS FORM

SECTION ONE: PERSONAL DETAILS

1.1. Personal information
If your surname has changed since birth for any reason (e.g. marriage), please could you include both your surname at birth and your current surname, as it is noted on official documents such as your passport or identity document.

1.2. Reference number
Please create a unique application reference number. This should start with the first letter of your first name, followed by the first four letters of your surname, plus the code for your home university, plus the code for your Pathway.

Home university codes:
- City, University London = City
- University of East Anglia = UEA
- University of Essex = Ess
- Goldsmiths, University of London = Gold
- University of Kent = Kent
- Reading University = Read
- Roehampton University = Roe
- Royal Holloway, University of London = RHUL
- University of Surrey = Surr
- University of Sussex = Suss
Pathway codes:
- Business and Management Studies = BusMan
- Development Studies = Dev
- Economics = Econ
- Education = Edu
- Human Geography = HGeo
- Linguistics = Ling
- Politics and International Relations = Pol
- Psychology = Psych
- Science, Technology, and Sustainability Studies = STS
- Social Anthropology = SocA
- Social Work and Social Policy = SWSP
- Socio-Legal Studies = SocLeg
- Sociology = Socio

For example, John Smith attending the University of Essex in the Sociology Pathway would have a reference of: JSmithEssSocio; and
Aaleyah Abidi attending the University of Sussex in the Development Studies Pathway would have a reference of: AAbidSussDev.

1.3. Home address
Please provide your home address at the point of application. That is, the address at which you are ordinarily resident during most of the year.

SECTION TWO: RESIDENTIAL ELIGIBILITY FOR A SeNSS ESRC-FUNDED STUDENTSHIP

This section applies to all applicants. However, depending on your residential status, you will be directed to different questions on the application form.

2.1. Residential eligibility rules
You must check your residential eligibility for a SeNSS studentship, as only Home and EU students are eligible to apply. There is ONLY ONE exception to this rule: international students may apply to the Economics Pathway and, if they are successful, may be given a full award.

Both Home and EU students must satisfy the standard Research Council eligibility criteria, which are set out below. If you have any questions about your eligibility, please contact your chosen university’s SeNSS administrative Lead.

To be eligible for a full award, you must have:

- Settled status in the UK, meaning there are no restrictions on how long you can stay in the UK; AND
- Been ‘ordinarily resident’ in the UK for 3 years prior to 1 October 2020, when the studentship starts. ‘Ordinarily resident’ means that you must have been normally residing in the UK (apart from any temporary or occasional absences; AND
• Not been residing in the UK wholly or mainly for the purpose of full-time education. However, this criterion does not apply to UK or EU nationals.

For case studies on how these rules are applied, please click [here](#).

A full SeNSS ESRC-funded studentship award includes the following for the duration of the award:
• your University tuition fees: these are paid in full directly to your University, and you will not be required to pay anything towards these fees;
• a tax-free maintenance stipend to pay your living costs: this is currently set at £15,009 per year. For those studying at universities based in London, there is an additional £2,000 per year paid as London Weighting, given that the cost of living is higher for those living in London. If you are not studying at a London-based University, but still choose to live in London, you will not receive the London Weighting payment;
• a research training support grant amounting to £750 per year; and,
• access to other funds for overseas fieldwork, overseas institutional visits, language training etc.

2.2. EU students living in the UK
Students from EU countries other than the UK are generally eligible for a fees-only award. To be eligible for a fees-only award, you must be ordinarily resident in a member state of the EU, in the same way as UK students must be ordinarily resident in the UK.

A fees-only award includes the following for the duration of the award:
• your University tuition fees will be paid in full directly to your University, and you will not be required to pay anything towards these fees;
• a research training support grant amounting to £750 per year; and,
• access to other funds for overseas fieldwork, overseas institutional visits, language training etc.
• However, you will NOT receive a tax-free maintenance stipend to pay your living costs.

As noted, international students are not eligible for an ESRC-funded SeNSS studentship award, EXCEPT if they are applying for an Economics studentship. An international student is one who does not qualify as a Home or an EU student under the UKRI residential eligibility rules, as outlined above.

• If you are a Home student or an international student applying for Economics, you will be directed to Q3.1;
• If you are an EU student, you will be directed to Q2.2, then Q3.1.
SECTION THREE: STUDENTSHIP AWARD DETAILS

3.1. Award type
Please indicate if you wish to apply for a full award, or a fees-only award. If you already have funds available to support yourself, you may wish to apply for a fees-only award, so that someone else without the same level of support can be fully funded.

Please note that you cannot hold a SeNSS studentship and another scholarship at the same time, except in exceptional circumstances.

3.2. Mode of study
SeNSS offers both full-time and part-time study. Please indicate which you prefer.

*** Once you have completed this form, please click on the green submit button at the bottom of the screen. ***

3. COMPLETING THE MAIN APPLICATION FORM

SECTION ONE: STUDENTSHIP AWARD DETAILS

1.1. Structure of studentship

This section applies to all applicants. However, depending on the structure of studentship you are applying for, you will be directed to different questions on the application form.

SeNSS offers the following studentship structures:

- **+3 studentship**: this consists of a three-year PhD;
- **1+3 studentship**: this comprises an integrated one-year Masters degree and a three-year PhD;
- **2+2 studentship**: this consists of a longer Masters programme followed by a shorter PhD programme; and,
- **+4 studentship**: this comprises both core and advanced training within the PhD programme.

All Pathways offer **1+3 and +3 studentships**. However:

- **2+2 studentships** are only offered by the Economics, and Politics and International Relations Pathways.
- **+4 studentships** may be offered by the following Pathways: Business and Management Studies, Economics, Education, Human Geography, Politics and International Relations, some sub-Pathways within Science, Technology, and Sustainability Studies, Socio-Legal Studies, and Sociology.
1.2. Declaration regarding studentship structure

This question applies to all applicants.

Please note that, if SeNSS determines that you have not already met the majority of the ESRC’s core research methods training requirements, you may be offered a different award structure from the one for which you applied. The decision regarding which structure of studentship you may be offered will be based on evidence provided in the past research methods training section of this application form (see Q6, below).

- If you are applying for a +3, 2+2 or +4 award, you will be directed to Q1.3.
- If you are applying for a 1+3 award, you will be directed to Q1.5.

1.3. Applying for a SeNSS studentship if you have already started your PhD

This question only applies to those applying for a +3, 2+2 or +4.

You may apply for a studentship even if you have already begun your PhD, provided that, at the start of your award in October 2020, you meet the following requirements:

- you have at least 50% of your period of study remaining (excluding your ‘writing up’ period); AND
- your degree structure is either a +3 studentship, a 2+2, or a +4 studentship.

For example, if you have been registered for your +3 PhD for one year of a full-time PhD at the point at which the studentship would commence, you would be eligible to apply for 2 years of further funding. If you have already been registered for 2 years at this point, you are not eligible for funding.

If your application is successful, you will receive funding for the remainder of your studies. However, you may only apply for funding for the remaining period of your studies if you are already studying at one of the SeNSS universities, and your current research project falls into one of the 13 SeNSS Pathways. If you have already started a 2+2 or a +4 PhD, your degree must be on the SeNSS compliant PhD list, or you will not be eligible for funding (see below).

Your next question is Q1.4.

1.4. The SeNSS compliant 2+2 or +4 degree you plan to study for

This question only applies to those applying for a 2+2 or +4.

Please consult the SeNSS compliant PhD list to obtain the full programme name and reference number of the compliant degree you plan to study for.

Your next question is Q1.6.
1.5. Your Masters degree

This question only applies to those applying for a 1+3.

1.5.1. The SeNSS compliant Masters you plan to study for

You may only apply for a Masters judged by SeNSS to be compliant with ESRC training outcomes, and offered by your chosen university.

In order to find out whether the Masters you want to take is compliant, please view the SeNSS compliant Masters list.

Here, you will find an Excel spreadsheet containing all the Masters degrees from all ten SeNSS universities which have been judged compliant. Please provide the SeNSS reference number for your intended Masters degree, which appears in the first column of the spreadsheet, e.g. “m001”.

Please ensure that you enter the Masters programme name exactly as contained in the spreadsheet, in your application form, as there are many degrees with similar names. This is the name in the second column of the spreadsheet, e.g. “MRes Social Science Research Methods”.

1.5.2. Studying for a Masters degree at a different institution from where you plan to study for your PhD

You are expected to complete your Masters and PhD at the same university. It is only in exceptional circumstances that you will be permitted to study for these at different SeNSS universities. If you need to split these studies between two institutions, please explain the exceptional circumstances that necessitate this split.

If you plan to study for your Masters at a different SeNSS university, you will need to discuss this very early on with both your proposed supervisor and your chosen university’s SeNSS Administrative Lead which, in this case, will be supervisor and lead at the university you plan to study at for your +3. Additional time will be required to organise this split between institutions, assuming it is possible.

1.6. Your SeNSS home university and Pathway

This question applies to all applicants.

Please identify the SeNSS university at which you propose to study - this will become your “home” institution. You are only permitted to make one application in this student-led competition to one SeNSS university.

Please identify the Pathway your research topic falls under. A full list of the 13 Pathways SeNSS offers is available here. If your proposal does not come within one of these, you will not be eligible for funding. SeNSS encourages applications which are inter- or multi-disciplinary, so please identify any other disciplines which are covered by your topic.
1.7. Concurrent funding applications

*This question applies to all applicants.*

Please indicate whether you are also applying for any other funded studentship at any other university or any other studentship funded by one of the RCUK (Research Councils of the United Kingdom).

Please note: this is for information only, and *will not prejudice your application to SeNSS in any way.*

SECTION TWO: YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL

*This section applies to all applicants.*

You must discuss your research proposal with your primary supervisor before submitting your application form. You will be asked to confirm in Section 9 of your application form that you have done this.

However, it is your responsibility to write your own research proposal, that is, it must not be written by anyone else, such as your supervisor, or one of your referees. Past experience shows that it can be easy to detect a proposal that has been written, or even partly written, by a supervisor rather than the applicant. If this appears to be the case, then your proposal may receive a lower score, or may be excluded from the competition altogether.

You should approach your proposal as an opportunity to show that you have begun to explore an important area of study, and that your research has the potential to challenge and develop that area. It is also important to demonstrate that you can express your ideas in clear and precise English, in such a way that someone who is an academic, but not a specialist in your subject area, can understand.

2.1. Research projects which use advanced quantitative methods (AQM)

SeNSS offers one AQM-badged studentship each year. To be eligible, you must show that your project meets one of the following three ESRC criteria:

Evidence that your research proposal is AQM-based: you must describe the relevance of particular AQMs to the main research questions presented in the proposal, and demonstrate how AQMs are vital to exploring your research question. This should include information about the kind of quantitative methodology and analysis that you intend to focus on, your current level of proficiency in core and advanced quantitative methods, and how your advanced skills are intended to be developed through training, and then used to address problems in new or innovative ways.

Evidence that the use of large data sets is central to your research proposal: you must have described the existing data sets that you intend to use in your research, including at least one ESRC-funded data resource or infrastructure (these are outlined in the AQM-Steered Studentship guidance document available here.)
You must have explained why these datasets are the best ones available to address your research questions / hypotheses. This should include some reference to whether or how far your proposed research will build on existing analyses using such data sets, and the capacity of your work to use under-exploited data sets. As appropriate, evidence of your past experience of using large datasets, or a training plan to equip you with the relevant technical skills, should be outlined.

**Evidence that big data and associated data analysis skills are central to your research proposal:** you must have explained why big data approaches are particularly suited to the research questions / hypotheses you have listed in your proposal and why and how these approaches enhance and/or are complementary to more traditional sources of data. You must describe your current proficiency in core and advanced data skills, and how your advanced skills are intended to be developed through training to support this project. If you plan to develop new and/or enhanced methods of analysis for such data, you must describe how you will do this, and what the impact of these new or enhanced methods will be.

### 2.2. Your research proposal title

Please state the title of your proposed research project (or your current PhD title, if you have already begun your studies). Your title must be no more than **80 characters**.

### 2.3. Your research proposal abstract

Please provide an abstract, or summary, of your research proposal. **This is limited to a maximum of 3,800 characters.** This should be a complete but concise description of your research proposal, written in such a way that a non-specialist reader will quickly be able to ascertain the purpose of your research project. Please note that SeNSS panellists who will be assessing your application may not be experts in your disciplinary area.

### 2.4. Giving permission for publishing your abstract

If you are awarded a studentship, your full research abstract will be made public by the ESRC via UKRI’s Gateway to Research. This is a condition of all studentship awards. If you are not happy for the version you provided in Q2.3 to be made public (for example, if you wish to protect your intellectual property), please provide a version of your abstract that you are happy to see made public.

### 2.5. Description of your research proposal

There is a strict limit of 10,000 characters (including spaces between words) for this section. This limit applies to the all the text contained in this text box, that is, to your proposal description, your research background and questions, your research methods, your schedule of work. This limit of 10,000 characters does not include your title, abstract or bibliography, for which different character limits apply. Please note that the application form does not accept footnotes.

If you exceed this limit, any additional characters will be disregarded by those assessing your application. This may mean that your application does not score as highly as it might have done.
Your proposal should follow the structure outlined below:

- Description of your research proposal. (If your proposal uses advanced quantitative methods (AQM), please ensure you explain this.)
- Research background and questions
- Research methods
- Proposed timeline
- Proposed impact

Consider covering the following points in this section:

- the key areas/issues covered by the project, the research problems or questions you intend to address and why;
- the research context within which those problems or questions are located;
- the particular contribution that you hope to make to the existing knowledge and understanding in this area, explaining why your research is important, and noting its relevance to, and potential impact for, non-academic beneficiaries, as appropriate;
- the methods and critical approaches that you plan to use, and the sources for these, if appropriate;
- if your project uses advanced quantitative methods (AQM), please explain which methods it uses, and how it uses them;
- if relevant, how the proposed research relates to what you have studied already (where there is overlap between your Masters dissertation and your doctoral research, you should demonstrate how the project will go further, and state the added value of continuing to research in this area);
- how the research project will develop over the period of the award (e.g. key stages, timetable); and,
- how this research relates to your eventual career aims.
- If you have already begun your doctoral study, indicate the work you have undertaken to date, providing information on main pieces of work completed.

In writing your proposal, please refer to the selection criteria, below, by which your application will be judged.
SeNSS STUDENT-LED STUDENTSHIP COMPETITION SELECTION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to assess applications across all pathways and degree formats.

Evidence of the quality and feasibility of the proposal (40%)
This will be based on your outline of your proposed research project, your reasons for pursuing it, and its wider significance. It will also be based on the information supplied by your proposed primary supervisor. SeNSS assessors will be looking for evidence of your ability to design and conduct a strong research project, a coherent and well thought-out research plan, a strong awareness of the place of your research within the current field, and potential impact. Reference will be made to your personal statement, as contained in your application, as well as your supervisor’s supporting statement.

Evidence that you are well-prepared for your proposed research and future career (40%)
This will be based on your description of how your previous experience (academic and/or professional) has prepared you for postgraduate study and research, your referees’ evaluation of your suitability for such research based on a) your performance at undergraduate and postgraduate level (if relevant); b) your relevant professional experience (if relevant); and c) your description of how the programme will contribute to your long-term career aims. Reference will be made to the degree transcripts and module marks you have provided. Reference will also be made to both your supervisor’s and referees’ supporting statements.

Evidence of the suitability of the proposed supervision and training (20%)
This will be based on your proposed supervisors’ research areas, knowledge and expertise in relation to your proposed project, the individual roles of the proposed supervisory team, your identified training needs and suggested ways of meeting those training needs. Reference will primarily be made to the information provided by your proposed primary supervisor which should, in turn, reflect on the expertise brought to your project by your second supervisor.

Please note that all 4-year award applications (1+3, 2+2 and +4) will be assessed in a way that recognises that applicants are likely to have had less training and fewer opportunities to develop a detailed proposed research project than an applicant for a +3 studentship.

2.6. Bibliography
Please list the key texts to which you have referred in your description of your research proposal. If there are additional important texts you wish to include, please
do so. There is no character limit for this section but you should only include texts which are directly relevant to your proposal.

2.7. Ethical considerations raised by your research proposal
Your proposed research is required to conform to the ethical standards of your home institution and to the ESRC's Framework for Research Ethics.

If you are unsure about ethical considerations, please discuss this with your proposed primary supervisor in the first instance.

SECTION THREE: RESOURCING

This section applies to all applicants.

Please note that simply stating in your application that you require additional resources does not guarantee that you will receive all the funds you have noted if your application is successful.

3.1. Research costs
Please read the SeNSS Research Training Support Grant guidance notes, which sets out the costs you can apply for under this fund. These are available in the resources section of the FluidReview website.

If successful, you will be able to claim up to £750 per year, or up to £3,500 across the lifetime of your award, for costs incurred directly in support of your research (excluding language training and overseas fieldwork, as discussed below). For example, these costs could be incurred in relation to interviewing participants, travel, attending conferences, accessing datasets etc.

If you are intending to undertake fieldwork in the UK, please note this, and set out your costs. In this case, you may be able to access more than £750 a year, or more than £3,500 across the lifetime of your award.

If your research costs are likely to exceed £750 per year, or more than £3,500 across the lifetime of your award, please state what your anticipated costs are, and how you plan to meet these costs.

3.2. Overseas fieldwork
Please think very carefully about whether you will need to conduct overseas fieldwork (OFW) for your research, and discuss this with your supervisor. OFW is defined as conducting fieldwork anywhere outside the UK. SeNSS offers a maximum of £6,000 to students wishing to conduct OFW.

If you are planning to conduct OFW, you must read the SeNSS Overseas Fieldwork policy: Guidance for students before completing this question. It is available in the resources section of the FluidReview website.
You will need to draw up a clear budget for your OFW that itemises all the standard costs you will incur (flights, visa, vaccinations etc.) with a brief justification for any further costs. Please be realistic when drawing up your fieldwork budget. That is, **please do not under- or over-cost** it. Those reviewing your SeNSS application form will assess whether or not your research project is feasible in light of your plan for conducting overseas fieldwork.

If you are awarded a SeNSS Studentship, you will need to submit a formal, more detailed application for funding for OFW once you have started your studies.

If you state in your application that you will not need to conduct OFW but change your mind after you start your studies, it is highly unlikely that you will be permitted to apply for funding to support this, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### 3.3. Language training

It is possible to be granted an extension to your funding for up to one year if you need to acquire or develop a working ability with a language where this is crucial to the success of your research. If you are planning to spend extended time in the field, **you are expected to be competent in a language which is used in the area in which you will be based.**

If you need to learn a language, you will first need to check whether this language qualifies for an extension, and for how long. Please refer to Annex 2 on page 43 of the ESRC’s Postgraduate Funding Guide for this information. (Please note that the ESRC refers to this as “difficult language training”.) Please discuss this with your supervisor. In doing so, you will need to consider issues such as whether you will need to develop competence in a local dialect, the level of competence you need to carry out your research etc.

You **must** read the SeNSS Difficult Language Training policy: Guidance for Students before answering this question. It is available in the resources section of the FluidReview website.

If you answer no to this question, you will not be permitted to apply for a language training extension if you change your mind once you have started your studentship.

Those reviewing your SeNSS application form will assess whether or not your research project is feasible in light of the language training you propose to undertake. In exceptional circumstances, we may require further evidence that you will be capable of learning the language in the time available.

Please note that, if you are awarded a SeNSS studentship, you will need to submit a more detailed application for an extension to your funding on the basis of needing to learn or develop a language, as this is not automatically granted, and will need to be supported by your supervisor.
SECTION FOUR: COLLABORATIVE STUDENTSHIP DETAILS

**Q4.1. applies to all applicants.**

A student-led research project with a collaborative element is one which is devised by the student, who identifies and approaches a non-academic partner (termed a “collaborative partner”) to collaborate with them on the project. **A collaborative partner can be a business, public or third sector organisation.** Collaborative partners must contribute something of value to the research project, for example, contributing financially to help cover studentship costs, providing access to their datasets, or providing an additional supervisor. It is not only important to demonstrate that the research project will benefit from this partner’s knowledge, skills and resources, but also how this partner will ultimately benefit from the knowledge and outcomes generated by the research project (impact).

4.1.1. Information about your collaborative partner(s)

*If you answer “no” to Q4.1, you will be directed to Q5.*

If you are applying for a studentship with a collaborative element, please provide:

- The name of the collaborating organisation(s); and,
- The name, position, and contact details of your contact in this (these) organisation(s).

Please supply a letter of support from your collaborative partner(s) for your research proposal. A template for a letter of support is available in the resources section of the SeNSS on-line application website. In brief, the letter should:

- state why the collaborator(s) would like to be a partner in this research project, and what they hope to gain from the collaboration; and,
- provide a brief statement about what the collaborator(s) will contribute to this project, including any cash and/or in-kind contributions.

To upload the letter of support, from the main menu click on ‘Add Document’ (on right hand side) and then either drag and drop the file or click on ‘Browse for files’.

4.1.3. Your collaborative partner’s contribution

Your collaborative partners can either contribute financially (up to 50% of the total value of the studentship), or in kind. "In kind" means that your collaborative partner will make a non-monetary contribution to your studentship, for example, it may provide an external supervisor for you, or allow you to access its datasets.
SECTION FIVE: YOUR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

*This section applies to all applicants.*

5.1. Details of your previous education and training
For each higher education qualification you hold, please provide the information outlined below. To assist you, examples of undergraduate and Masters degrees are provided on the application form.

- Qualification and title of award;
- Name of university/institution studied at;
- Name of country in which this university/institution is situated;
- Month and year that the programme started;
- Month and year that the programme has been/will be completed; and,
- Degree classification (where awarded), or marks obtained for completed modules.

If you have already started your PhD, for the “degree classification” line, please state whether, at your last supervisory board meeting (or equivalent), your progress was satisfactory or not.

SECTION SIX: YOUR PAST RESEARCH METHODS TRAINING

*This section applies to all applicants.*

This information is needed to determine whether your Masters complies with the prior research methods training outcomes required by both SeNSS and the ESRC. These learning outcomes have been agreed in order to ensure you are in the best possible position to undertake your PhD research. Both the ESRC’s requirements and SeNSS’s Learning Outcomes are available in the FluidReview resources section.

- **If you either hold a Masters from a SeNSS university, or you are currently studying for a Masters through a SeNSS university,** you will need to check whether it is compliant with the ESRC and SeNSS’s learning outcomes. The database of compliant Masters is available at: [SeNSS compliant Masters list](#).
  - If your degree is on the compliant list, you will need to enter your Masters’ reference number and name, and you will be directed to Section Seven (Q7) next.
  - If your degree is not on the compliant list, you will be directed to Q6.3, where you will be asked questions about your professional experience in relation research methods training.

- **If you hold a Masters degree from a university which is not a member of the SeNSS consortium,** you will be directed to Q6.3, where you will be asked questions about your professional experience in relation research methods training.
• If you do not hold a Masters degree, but think that you have professional experience which you believe is equivalent to a Masters, you will be directed to Q6.3, where you will be asked questions about your professional experience in relation research methods training.

Based on the information you provide, if your Masters degree and/or your professional experience is judged as having sufficient research methods training, you will be permitted to apply for a +3 PhD.

If your Masters degree or professional experience does not include sufficient research methods training, you will either be required to study for a second Masters degree via our 1+3 structure of study, or you might be awarded one or two terms’ worth of additional funding (either a +3.25 or a +3.5 award) to complete this training.

Research methods: prior training assessment
There are seven elements of research methods training to be assessed. For each of these seven elements, there is a list of all the types of training you may have undergone or where your professional experience may have covered these:

• the use of software;
• academic communication;
• research design;
• basic scientific method;
• qualitative research methods;
• quantitative research methods; and,
• and general research knowledge and skills.

Please tick all of those which apply, and state either which modules covered this training, and how it was covered, or how your professional experience has covered these. If you have had formal training in these elements, please provide the name of the module which covered these, and either provide a hyperlink to a webpage with a detailed module outline, or upload a copy of the detailed module outline to FluidReview.

SECTION SEVEN: YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE

This section applies to all applicants.

7.1. Your work experience
Please detail any work experience that is relevant to your proposed project.

Where you have held more than one relevant post, please record all of these, placing line breaks in between each, using the following format:
• The name of your employer/organisation;
• The position you held in this organisation;
• The date you started working there, and the date on which you finished your employment;
• Briefly, what your responsibilities were in relation to your position; and,
• Any on the job training you received and/or skills you gained. If these have any bearing on your proposed research project, please provide details of how this training and these skills will benefit you in carrying out your research.

7.2. Gaps in this your work record
If there are any gaps in your professional experience record, please explain these. For example, gaps may appear in your record from taking parental leave, being someone’s carer, or being unemployed, etc. Please note that any gaps you list will not have a negative effect on your application.

SECTION EIGHT: YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

This section applies to all applicants.

Please address the issues outlined below:

• Your reasons for applying, and why you deserve a studentship: please discuss your academic interests, and why you wish to study with SeNSS, your chosen university, and your chosen department. Please discuss those aspects of studying with SeNSS you find most appealing, such as taking certain modules or placement opportunities. Please demonstrate your preparedness for the demands of postgraduate life by discussing your passion for your topic, as well as your existing knowledge and experience.

• your career goals: please tell us about your long-term career ambitions, and how a SeNSS studentship relates to these.

• your preparation: please discuss how your undergraduate and/or Masters degree study has prepared you for your proposed research project.

• your skillset: please highlight your relevant skills and knowledge that will enable you to make an impact, and what that impact will be; and summarising your abilities in core areas related to your research project, including IT, organisation, communication, time management and critical thinking. Please also make reference to any grades you’ve achieved, awards you’ve won, placements you’ve undertaken, or conferences you’ve attended which have either helped prepare you for your research project, or which make you an excellent candidate for a SeNSS studentship.

Please note: there is a maximum word count of 500 words for this section.

SECTION NINE: CONSULTING YOUR SUPERVISORY TEAM

This section applies to all applicants.

You must consult with your supervisor in drafting your application.

For information: SeNSS and the ESRC both require that you have at least two supervisors, one of whom will be your primary supervisor. Your proposed primary supervisor must be based at your chosen SeNSS university, and you must consult
this supervisor about completing your application form. You should discuss the issue of who your second supervisor should be with your primary supervisor, as they are best-placed to know who would add the most value to your research project and your supervisory team. Your second supervisor can also be based at your chosen university, or can be based at another SeNSS university.

SECTION TEN: YOUR DECLARATION

This section applies to all applicants.

Please complete the declaration.

4. COMPLETING THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FORM

This form applies to all applicants.

SeNSS is committed to an Equal Opportunities Policy, and we acknowledge and embrace diversity.

SeNSS and the ESRC are committed to ensuring that those applying for studentships are selected on the basis of merit. By completing this form, you will help us to ensure that our policies and procedures are effective in avoiding discrimination and promoting equal opportunities in awarding studentships. SeNSS needs your help and co-operation to enable it to do this. Filling in this form is not voluntary but, if there are questions you do not wish to answer, you have the option of ticking “prefer not to say”. The information you provide will be used for monitoring and statistical purposes only, will stay confidential, and be stored securely. Access to this information will be limited to the core SeNSS staff members.

The information you provide on this form will not be released to those involved in making the decision on who receives a studentship.

5. TASKS: PROVIDING YOUR SUPERVISORY TEAM AND YOUR REFEREES’ DETAILS

These tasks must be done by all applicants.

Please provide the names and details of your two referees, as well as your proposed primary supervisor.

Referees’ details

Please provide the names and contact details of two people who you want to act as your referees. Both your referees will be contacted to ask them to supply a reference for you. Please choose your referees carefully: they should have a good knowledge of your academic record, your research plans and your preparedness for doctoral study. If you have not been in higher education recently, please provide a referee who can comment on your professional record and capabilities in relation to your preparedness for doctoral study.
You may nominate one of the members of your supervisory team (either your primary or secondary supervisor) to act as one of your referees. If you ask your proposed primary supervisor to also act as one of your referees, they would need to provide both a supervisor statement and a reference for you. However, it is not necessary for one of your referees to be one of your proposed supervisors.

Please note that at least one of your referees must not have any direct connection to your proposed PhD research project.

6. ONCE YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE APPLICATION FORM

6.1. Next steps
- You will need to save the form and exit it once you have completed filling it in. You will then be returned to your application home page.
- **Upload degree transcripts**: please scan your degree certificates or official award letters and official transcripts, and upload them to your application. You can do this by clicking the start button.
- **Upload a letter of support, if you have a collaborative element to your studentship**: if you are applying for a studentship with a collaborative element, please scan your letter of support from your collaborative partner, and upload it to your application. You can do this by clicking the start button.
- **For supervisor and referee recommendations**: click the start button for the supervisor, referee 1 and referee 2, one at a time. This will open a new page. Please type in the first name, last name and email address of your proposed supervisor. You will also be asked how you know this person.

In order to ensure that your supervisor/referee completes a supporting statement for you, please inform them that they will be getting an email requesting a statement. Sometimes these emails may get labelled as spam and placed in their spam/junk folder, so please ask them to check these folders in the event that they don't see the email requesting them to write a supporting statement.

**Note**: If your supervisor doesn't receive an email within 24 hours, you can try resending the request. If your supervisor still doesn't get the email, please contact FluidReview via their support page. Please be sure to include the email address of your supervisor/referee.

7. SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION
Once your application is complete, you must submit it online.