**CENTA Studentship Application for 2025 Intake**

**Guidance to applicants**

**This form must be submitted along with your CV and any local application form to the university hosting your chosen project.**

**Please note, although you might need to duplicate some of the information requested on this form on your host university’s application portal, it is the information in *this* form which is used to assess the success of your application. Therefore, please ensure you put your effort into the completion of this form, rather than the personal statement etc fields on the host university application portal. Please complete this form in full and do not skip any sections.**

CENTA Studentship Application forms are submitted to the host institution via their application portal but are then shared with the CENTA Admin Team, in order to facilitate processing of candidates through the selection and offer process and processing of EDI data for reporting purposes.

CENTA studentships are open to all, and this means we want to do our best to ensure that CENTA students reflect our society. CENTA are therefore committed to widening the diversity of our PhD student cohorts.

**Personal details**

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| **EDI Survey Completion Receipt Number**  This can be obtained by going to:  <https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/bham/edi-survey-for-centa-phd-applicants-2025-entry> | **Application forms without this number will automatically be rejected.** |
| **Forename** |  |
| **Surname** |  |
| **Email address** |  |
| **Please tick to confirm that you have not had assistance / coaching from the project supervisor or used a chatbot in completing this form**  Whilst we encourage you to discuss the project with the project supervisors in advance, the answers on this form should be entirely in your own words with no help from project supervisors, supervisor(s) in current institute or other academics in the preparation, writing and editing of answers to each question. | |
| **Home/ International** | Please indicate which category applies to you:  **Home Student:  International Student:**  To be classed as a **home** student, candidates must meet the following criteria:   * Be a UK National, or * Have settled status, or * Have pre-settled status, or * Have indefinite leave to remain or enter * Be an Irish National   If a candidate does not meet the criteria above, they would be classed as an *International* student.  The full eligibility criteria can be found in Annex B of this document from UKRI: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/UKRI-020424-TrainingGrantTermsConditionsGuidanceApril2024.pdf>  **For international applicants**:  UKRI allows international students to be eligible for studentships but only for a maximum of 30% of the cohort (please cf.: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/UKRI-030221-Guidance-International-Eligibility-Implementation-training-grant-holders-V2.pdf>). Please consider the potential gap between the home and international fee rate and contact the named supervisor of the project you apply for to discuss any support the hosting University may offer you (e.g., self-funded difference, or - if available - an international fee waiver). |

**Widening Participation**

In order to address a historical imbalance, we offer a preferred interview scheme for certain under-represented groups of Home-award-eligible students who meet the academic and fit to project requirements, representing up to half of the available interview numbers.

The academic requirements are at least a 2:1 at UK BSc level or at least a pass at UK MSc level or equivalent **(*see Q1 and Q2 below*)** and your skills and experience must also show at least an appropriate fit with the selected PhD project **(*see Q5 below*).**

In order to qualify for the preferred interview scheme you must:

1. identify as BAME & be eligible for a Home award;
2. OR the postcode where you went to school or grew up must be classified as Quintile 1 in the POLAR4 category of the following website:

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/search-by-postcode/>

*If the online tool does not bring up the results the first time you click the View Results button please click it again, or try again in a different browser.*

Please note that only Home-award-eligible students (not International students) will qualify for this scheme.

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| **Do you identify as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME?)** | **YES/NO** |
| **Postcode of area you grew up in or went to school in** | e.g. MK41 9LE |
| **POLAR4 quintile score of that postcode** | e.g. 2 |

**Project details**

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| **Project title** |  |
| **Host institution** |  |
| **Where did you hear about this project?** |  |
| **Have you been in touch with any of the project supervisors to discuss this project?** | **YES/NO**  Experience shows that students who are engaged in early discussions about the project with the supervisors are more likely to be successful in their application. We therefore encourage you to contact your potential supervisors and ask any questions you may have about the project and CENTA. Your application will be assessed regardless of your answer. |

**Q1. Bachelors-level degrees awarded and grade/classification**

For 4 year integrated masters (MSci, MGeol etc.) please report your *third* year mark here and the final “M” grade in Q2.

Where a final grade is not yet known, please provide a predicted grade justified from your academic transcript. Please ensure that your academic referee is aware that they should also provide a predicted grade in their reference letter.

If you gained your Bachelor’s degree at a non-UK institution, please check the international student webpages at the host institution for your project for guidance on the UK equivalent of your grades.

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| **Start date** | **End date** | **University** | **Subject** | **Qualification awarded**  **(e.g., BSc)** | **Class/grade awarded**  **(local and UK equivalent)** |
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**Q2. Masters-Level degrees and grade/classification or equivalent experience**

Where a final grade is not yet known, please provide a predicted grade justified from your academic transcript or indicate whether only a pass/fail is awarded. Please ensure that your academic referee is aware that they should also provide a predicted grade in their reference letter.

If you gained your MSc (or are working towards one) at a non-UK institution, please check the international student webpages at the host institution for your project for guidance on the UK equivalent of your grades.

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| **Start date** | **End date** | **University** | **Subject** | **Qualification awarded or predicted**  **(e.g., MSc, MSci, etc.)** | **Class/grade awarded or predicted**  **(local and UK equivalent)** |
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| **Q3. Why do you want to do a PhD?**  A PhD is a 3.5-4-year commitment that requires high personal motivation. Please explain in **up to 150 words** how doing a PhD will lead to your chosen career. Why are you interested in research? How did you develop that interest? |
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| **Q4. What interests you about this project in particular?**  Interest in a project will significantly underpin your motivation during your studies. Please provide **up to 150 words** to explain/describe the key aspects or points that drew you to apply for this project. |
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| **Q5. What project-specific skills, aptitude and experience do you bring to this particular PhD project?**  In up to **200** words please tell us how your skills fit with this PhD. You can use examples from a wide variety of life experience including work, academic study, research, presentations or public engagement activities, wider reading, extra-curricular activities such as sports, volunteering or other community activities etc. |
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| **Q6. What do you think is one of the key research issues in the field of the PhD project you are applying for?**  You may use **up to 350 words** for your answer, showing evidence of information found from a wide range of academic or non-academic sources.  If you wish you may provide a separate Harvard-style reference list at the end of your answer, which will not be included in the 350 word count. Alternatively you may use in-text references (e.g. I love dinosaurs (Matthews, 2020)) which will be included in the 350 word count. |
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| **Q7.**  **How do you plan and manage tasks and time during longer-term projects?**  Good project and time management skills are key to the successful completion of a PhD, so here is the opportunity to show us how you approach planning and carrying out projects. In **up to 150 words** please describe how you plan tasks and manage your time, using evidence from your academic, work or life experience. |
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| **Q8. What strategies do you use to solve problems?**  Experience shows that you will have to solve many problems during your PhD research, so here is the opportunity to show us how you approach problem solving. In **up to 150 words** please describe a problem you have had to solve during your studies, at work, at home or elsewhere. Please describe how you solved the problem and how you might respond differently if you were faced with that problem again. |
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| **Q9. Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about that helps us understand a bit more about you?** For example, you could tell us about any extra-curricular activities such as sports, arts, or other clubs; volunteering; outreach; any grants or prizes you have been awarded; any other skills learned during internships or work placements etc. |
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| **Q10. OPTIONAL Individual Circumstances:**  CENTA is committed to widening participation and opportunity for PhD studentships to a diverse community of applicants. To help provide further context to your application, here is an **optional** opportunity to provide information or context that may be relevant to assessing your academic career path thus far. This may include (but is not limited to) caring responsibilities, disabilities, ill health and/or financial pressures. Personal details are NOT needed, but a note about the *effect* of the circumstance on time available for study/extra-curricular experience and the *timescale* over which the event(s) took place would be helpful for appropriately evaluating your application relative to opportunity. |
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