MRC Precision Medicine Collaborative Studentship – Non-academic project partner terms

The objectives of the Collaborative Studentship scheme are to:

- provide students with experience of collaborative research with a non-academic partner
- strengthen and develop collaboration and partnerships between universities and non-academic partner organisations
- offer outstanding students an experience of at least two distinct research cultures
- provide access to a wider-than-usual range of technology, facilities and expertise
- enable the student to spend a period of time with the non-academic partner in a non-academic setting (usually no less than three months over the lifetime of the PhD).

Non-academic partners must provide training and experience that is distinct from an academic setting. NHS Trusts and other public-sector organisations may act as partners where they offer unique training opportunities not available within the University. Eligibility is determined by the DTP and must comply with UKRI Training Grant Terms & Conditions. Partners may be UK-based or international organisations. International partners are eligible where they provide training not currently available in the UK and where mobility arrangements comply with UKRI and institutional policies.

Non- academic partners must:

- provide co-supervision
- make a contribution of no less than 20% and up to a maximum of 50% of the total notional studentship costs (currently ~ £135k for a 4-year studentship) - small to medium size enterprises (SMEs; typically defined as an independent business with fewer than 250 employees and within the certain financial thresholds) are exempt. Your partner organisation will be responsible for determining if they are a SME or not.
- host the student for a minimum of three months during their PhD. This placement does not need to occur in one single continuous period
- meet any costs incurred by the student when visiting and working within their establishment, including the cost of travel and accommodation as appropriate

Financial Contributions

Non-academic partners are expected to make a significant contribution of no less than 20% and up to a maximum of 50% of the total notional studentship costs. SMEs are exempt from these contributions. Financial contributions (cash and in-kind) are agreed locally between the DTP, University, and non-academic partner organisation. The University is required by MRC to record the contribution of the non-academic partner to projects. In-kind contributions may include supervision time, access to facilities, data, or specialist training.

Requirement	
Supervision of Student	Required

Financial contribution (non-SME)	No less than 20% and up to a maximum of 50% of the total notional studentship costs (currently ~ £135k for a 4-year studentship).
Student placement	A cumulative placement of approximately three months is expected, but may be split, hybrid, remote, or distributed across the project. Placement arrangements must support student wellbeing, safety, visa requirements, and EDI considerations.
Company costs associated with placement	The **company's costs** while the student is working at the premises of the company
Reimbursement of costs associated with student placement	**All additional expenses, incurred by the student as a direct result of attendance at the premises for placement**. Includes, but not limited to, the cost of travel and accommodation. Costs must comply with UKRI rules on allowable expenses and institutional travel policies.

Intellectual property rights

- Any Foreground IP (i.e. generated solely by the student/UoE, or jointly between student/UoE and the non-academic partner) would have to be owned by UoE.
- Any Foreground generated solely by the non-academic partner without University or Student input would be owned by the non-academic partner.
- IP ownership and licensing arrangements must be agreed in a collaboration agreement before the project begins. An assignation will be put in place for the student with the University to allow management of IP.
- Students must retain the right to publish and submit their thesis. Any publication delays (including thesis embargo) for IP protection must be reasonable and time-limited (typically ≤3 months), and pre-agreed with the University.
- Under some circumstances it may be acceptable for the non-academic partner to receive a non-exclusive licence and option to use data generated by the project for internal research and development purposes, where this explicitly excludes any rights to, or capacity to, prevent exploitation of the data by UoE. Licensing arrangements must comply with both UKRI/MRC expectations for open research, responsible innovation and fair access, and to the MRC/UKRI Industrial collaboration guidelines which considers the relative contribution by the non-academic partner to the project.
- The non-academic partner may have a right to negotiate for access (at a fair market price) to the academic party's IP, but terms cannot be agreed until the project is completed.

Ethics and Approvals

- All research must comply with MRC Additional Terms & Conditions, including ethics, regulatory approvals, data protection, and research integrity.

Research Culture, EDI, and Wellbeing

- Partners must provide an inclusive, safe, and supportive training environment. Students must have clear routes for reporting bullying, harassment, or concerns.

Data Management and Governance

- Data handling must comply with UKRI/MRC policies, GDPR, and institutional data management plans.

Thesis and Publication Rights

- Students must be able to publish the results and submit their thesis without undue restriction. Any embargoes must be time-limited and justified.

Conflict of Interest

- Supervisors and partners must declare and manage conflicts of interest at the outset of the project and if they subsequently arise.