RCUK Frequently Asked Questions for Studentships on researchfish®

This set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) includes three sections, providing information for:

A. Students, supervisors and training managers (including training programme directors and administrators)
B. Students
C. Supervisors and training managers

A. Information for students, supervisors and training managers

1. What is researchfish®?
   Researchfish® is the system that the UK Research Councils use to gather feedback from all Research Council funded researchers about the outcomes from their work (examples of types of outcomes are described at question18). Researchfish® is a service provided by Researchfish Ltd (www.researchfish.com).

2. Why do we need to capture outcomes data?
   The Research Councils (RCUK) have a responsibility to demonstrate the value and impact of research and training supported through public funding. RCUK uses information that researchers provide on the outputs, outcomes and impact (subsequently referred to as ‘outcomes’) of their Research Council-funded projects to report to, and engage with, both the Government and the public. See further information here: http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/researchoutcomes/

3. Why do we ask for this information from students?
   The Research Councils have extended their outcomes collection exercise to include students, in recognition of the excellent research undertaken by our postgraduate community and to allow us to acknowledge specifically the contribution made by our support to studentships. The Councils agreed that it was important for Research Council-funded doctoral students to be able to tell us about their activities and successes, about how students contribute to their respective areas of research and how they engage with partner organisations and communities. This allows us to find ways to further promote these achievements and to acknowledge the work that has been undertaken. As funders with Royal Charters to support research and training, studentships are a crucial part of the RCUK portfolio.

4. Who needs to submit outcomes data via researchfish®?
   RCUK does not ask for outcomes until a certain point has been reached in a studentship. For the 2017 Submission Period, students who’s funding started after 5th February 2015 will not be asked to submit. There are a limited number of studentships on the system already where students were asked to submit in 2016, but who’s funding actually began after this date. Where this is the case, to keep things simple RCUK has decided to still ask those students to submit as part of the 2017 exercise.

   Login details have previously been provided to all current RCUK funded students whose studentship awards are already on researchfish®. However if any student is having problems accessing their researchfish® account please contact the researchfish® support help desk at support@researchfish.com
Students who are co-funded by two Research Councils will only need to provide outcomes data to one Research Council – the name of the lead Research Council is provided in researchfish® and can be seen after logging in.

Students who are funded by other organisations that also use researchfish® to collect outcomes information (including a number of medical charities) will be contacted by them directly and are not associated with the RCUK outcomes collection exercise.

5. Will the Research Councils be assessing my performance / the performance of individual students using researchfish® data?

Research Councils will not use researchfish® data to assess the performance of individual students or review the progress of individual studentships. In addition, there is no expectation that doctoral students will have specific outcomes or outputs to report. The Councils agreed that it was important for Research Council funded doctoral students to be able to tell us about their activities and successes, and about how students contribute to their respective areas of research and how they engage with partner organisations and communities.

6. How should studentship information be corrected?

Details of RCUK studentships, including student contact information and project abstracts, are submitted by Research Organisations (ROs) through Je-S Student Details shortly after students start their PhD. Any information that is out of date or otherwise incorrect should be updated by ROs through Je-S Student Details. Students should contact their RO researchfish® administrator who will be able to facilitate the changes being made in Je-S. The RO administrator should also contact the Research Outcomes Support Team (researchoutcomes@rcuk.ac.uk) who will make the changes in researchfish®.

7. Availability of the data added to researchfish®?

Outcomes information entered into researchfish® is accessible by the funding organisation (e.g. Research Council) and the award holding organisation (e.g. University) when it is attributed to an award (such as a studentship). The Research Councils may share this information, confidentially, between Councils to help us understand research progress, productivity and quality. For studentships on training grants awarded after February 2015, the information is published via the RCUK Gateway to Research (http://gtr.rcuk.ac.uk/), in keeping with the Research Councils' commitment to an Open Access policy for research outputs.

The information submitted via researchfish® is governed by a contractual agreement and the Researchfish Ltd is not permitted to share, pass on or exploit any information submitted. However, as the Research Councils do publish information via the Gateway to Research users are advised not to enter any confidential information into researchfish®.

Only information formally submitted to researchfish® will be published. Submitting data means inputting the information in researchfish® (at any time) and clicking the ‘Submit’ button during the Submission Period (6th February to 16th March 2017). You should ensure that information submitted via researchfish® is not confidential or personal and can be published.
Research Councils will also publish aggregated, non-attributable information about research outcomes via a number of sources such as annual Impact Reports.

8. Accessibility of the researchfish® system
We have acted on the concerns raised and have worked with Researchfish Ltd to improve accessibility of the website. Researchfish Ltd has employed the services of an experienced User Experience Designer to lead the design of a refreshed User Interface, placing accessibility and usability at the heart of the project. The new User Interface will be available for the 2017 Submission Period. The researchfish® application is built on Drupal which contains a number of features designed to make web pages accessible to users with disabilities in line with the W3Cs Web Accessibility Initiative (for further information see here https://www.drupal.org/about/features/accessibility).

9. Applicability for the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (and other disciplines)
Developing a system to collect the outcomes and outputs of research which is applicable to all research communities is a priority for the Research Councils, and we recognise that there is still work to do in this area. Researchfish, the system used by all seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, and STFC), is also used by around 80 funding organisations across the United Kingdom, and now funders in Denmark and Canada. Changes to the system are implemented after discussion between all the different funders and may therefore take some time to be reflected within researchfish® itself.
Researchfish is a continually evolving system and we recognise that further work is needed to include more relevant options for disciplines across the remits of all of the Research Councils. We actively welcome input where our research communities across all disciplines are aware of key types of research outcomes and outputs which are not yet represented within this system.

10. How can I provide feedback to Research Councils or Researchfish Ltd?
You can send feedback directly to the Research Councils via the following email address researchoutcomes@rcuk.ac.uk or you can contact Researchfish themselves at support@researchfish.com

B. Information for students

11. As a student, what do I need to do?
You are responsible for providing information about the outcomes from your studentship. Once your studentship has been added to researchfish® (see Section A, question 4, for when this will happen) you will be invited to enter and submit data to researchfish® every year until three years after your studentship has finished (since many outcomes occur towards or past the end of studentships). You should make sure your contact details are kept up to date for this purpose. For this year’s data collection, the submission period is 6th February to 16th March 2017. Your primary supervisor should also have been given access to your studentship details on researchfish® (added as a ‘team member’) and will be able to help you provide the outcomes information. Additional supervisors can be added to your researchfish® portfolio as ‘team members’. 
12. I am not seeking to pursue a career in academia. How should I complete my researchfish® submission?
The Research Councils recognise that many students will pursue careers outside of academia following the completion of their studentship. Providing skilled individuals to the wider economy is an important outcome of our investment in post-graduate training. The Research Councils would still wish to know what outcomes, outputs or impacts had been realised from the research that you have undertaken, regardless of your future career choices.

13. My details are incorrect, how do I update them?
If your details change, you should contact your RO’s lead researchfish® administrator, who will facilitate getting your details updated in Je-S Student Details.

If you need to make changes to the details of your award (such as the title of your PhD) you will need to get the approval of your supervisor and the Graduate School. Once the changes have been approved please contact your RO administrator, who will make the changes in Je-S Student Details. The RO administrator must also send the changes to the Research Outcomes Support Team (researchoutcomes@rcuk.ac.uk) who will make the amendments in researchfish®.

14. How do I log on to researchfish®?
You will already have been sent an invitation email by researchfish® on behalf of RCUK when your studentship award was added to the system (in September 2015 or January 2016). This invite email provided a link to allow you to register on the researchfish® system and create your own account. If you have any problems logging on, or have any please contact the researchfish® support help desk at support@researchfish.com.

Researchfish® includes the ability for you to manage your profile information (including making changes to your password and email address, or adding your ORCID ID (http://orcid.org/)). You can do this via the “Profile” section of the system.

15. How can I get help using the system?
There are several ways students can get help with using the researchfish® system:

i. You can access the online Researchfish user guide via the following link https://userguide.researchfish.com/

ii. Help and guidance is provided throughout the system, just click on the ‘Help and Support’ button towards the top left on each page in the researchfish® system. Just below that there is also a blue button entitled ‘Help using this page’ on most pages which when you click on it will walk you through each page’s main features.

iii. If your question is not addressed by the introductory video or context-specific help, then raise this via the researchfish® online help centre which can be accessed via the top of any researchfish® page, or by using the following link https://app.researchfish.com/helpwiz . You can find a list of their own FAQs on the help centre pages, or at https://app.researchfish.com/documentation

iv. Once logged into researchfish® there is also the option of “live chat” from 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday https://app.researchfish.com/helpwiz/contact . Live chat provides you with the opportunity to instantly message the researchfish® helpdesk, who have the ability to emulate your account and see on their screens exactly what issues you may be experiencing.
v. If you have any policy-related questions about adding outcomes to the system, you can contact the RCUK Research Outcomes Support Team. Please bear in mind that they do not have the ability to see any issues you are experiencing in your researchfish® account, so system-related queries should only go to researchfish® themselves to resolve. You can email the team at researchoutcomes@rcuk.ac.uk, or contact them by phone on 0800 2922 478 (Mon-Fri 8:30am to 4:30pm)

16. How do I start entering outcomes data?
When you log on to researchfish® you can click the “view portfolio” button on the “Enter Outputs” line. You can enter details of outcomes by clicking on the relevant section on the left of the page (publications, collaborations, etc.), following the instructions. It is important that you then associate each outcome with the relevant award(s) as shown in https://userguide.researchfish.com/add-outcomes.html. In this section your studentship will be listed on the right of the screen.

17. When do I have to finish entering data?
You can enter data at any time but you will be asked to confirm that all of your information is accurate and complete by submitting your data during the annual Submission Period. The next Submission Period is 6th February until 16th March 2017. You will receive a reminder email to finish entering and submit your data. Successful submissions will be confirmed by the system via email.

18. What do I need to report?
There are a whole range of outcomes that can be reported on researchfish®; however, many will not be relevant to you as a student (as this is a system used by everyone funded by the Research Councils). The most likely sections of relevance for you include:
   i. Publications – tell us about any papers you have published as part of your PhD, and your Thesis when applicable
   ii. Collaborations – tell us about any work you have completed in collaboration, for example with an industrial partner or another academic group
   iii. Engagement Activities – tell us about any instances where you communicated your research to a non-academic audience, e.g. presentations at science fairs or schools (note that information about attendance at academic conferences is not required)
   iv. Other Outputs & Knowledge / Future Steps – a section to allow you to tell us about anything else you think is an important outcome from your research
   v. Secondments, Placements and Internships – an opportunity to report any time spent at other organisations.
You are able to report about conferences in researchfish®, but not simply that a conference has been attended. RCUK are interested in the impacts that conference attendances and presentations have actually had e.g. influence on a policy/practice, a collaboration that came out of meeting people there, or even the publication of a conference paper. Most other sections are unlikely to be relevant, although there may be exceptions (such as Intellectual Property (IP) generated as part of your studentship).

You will also be asked a number of mandatory Additional Questions which will appear below the Common Outcomes mentioned above. You must be complete these before you are able to make your submission

19. What happens if I don’t have any outcomes to report?
The Research Councils recognise that many outcomes and impacts occur towards the end
of a project or after it has finished. However, many outcomes also arise throughout the course of a studentship. Research Councils would encourage students to think broadly about their achievements during their study that could be recorded in researchfish® (e.g. research findings, participation in a science communication activity, participation in a secondment or placement).

If you do not have anything report at this stage of your studentship, you are able to submit a blank response.

You will be invited to submit outcomes data again each year until three years after the end of your project.

20. I know there was an open letter sent to RCUK from students during the 2016 Submission Period. Where can I see its contents and the response that RCUK made?
Both the Open Letter sent by students and RCUK’s response to this can be found on the RCUK website

C. Information for supervisors and training managers

21. As a supervisor, what do I need to do
You will be added as a Team Member onto the account of your student’s project if you are listed as their primary supervisor on Je-S. This means that you can see the entries made and help provide additional entries via your own researchfish® account. Other people, e.g. second supervisors, can also be added as team members on a studentship. If you have been added to a student’s record who you no longer supervise, you should contact your RO’s lead researchfish® administrator, who will be facilitate getting your details updated in Je-S. You or your RO administrator should ask the student to remove you from their team in researchfish®.

If you already have experience of reporting research outcomes using researchfish®, you may wish to help advise on the type of information to provide and ensure that your student attends any training sessions organised by the RO. **Note that only students can submit the final result.** Submitting data means inputting the information in researchfish® (at any time) and clicking the ‘Submit’ button during the data gathering period (**6th February to 16th March 2017**).

22. As a training manager, what do I need to do?
As a Director, manager or administrator of a DTP, CDT or other RCUK training programme, we would encourage you to ensure that students are provided with the support and training they need to submit accurate and complete outcomes data. If appropriate, this might involve organising a training session for students and supervisors.

23. What is the timetable of activities?

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<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6th February</strong></td>
<td><strong>16th March 2017</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>All studentship data will be refreshed in researchfish® based on current Je-S information</td>
<td>Research Councils &amp; Researchfish Ltd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late November 2016 to early January 2017</td>
<td>ROs will be asked to examine response codes for all of their studentship awards and request changes</td>
<td>Research Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid to late January 2017</td>
<td>Final lists of students who will be asked to submit are finalised. Emails will be sent out regarding the 2017 Submission Period, and all students who have not yet registered on researchfish® will be re-sent an invite email</td>
<td>Research Councils &amp; Researchfish Ltd</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th February to 16th March 2016</td>
<td>2017 Submission Period: students asked to submit outcomes via researchfish®</td>
<td>Students with support from Research Organisations and supervisors</td>
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24. **My Team member/supervisor invitation code is not working**

Your student may not have accepted their researchfish® invitation. Until they have set up their account you will be unable to synch with them as a team member. If they have accepted and you still cannot join, please contact support@researchfish.com. If you need a new invite, please ask your student to resend it through researchfish®.

25. **How will outcomes reporting be monitored?**

ROs can access compliance data directly through their Dashboards on researchfish® and will be provided with regular reports on data activity during the exercise. There will be no formal sanctions for non-compliance of studentship outcome reporting, however compliance levels may be taken into account during assessment of future applications for training grants. Data provision by finished students will be monitored separately and will not be included in consideration of future training grant applications.

26. **Who will have access to the information?**

Students can access data about outcomes from their studentship by logging in to researchfish® at any time. Supervisors will also have access as a team member and can see the data via their own researchfish® account.

ROs will be provided with studentship outcomes data associated with their organisation after the Submission Period.

Information relating to outcomes of RC-specific training programmes (such as DTPs and CDTs) will be provided separately to relevant contacts (e.g. DTP / CDT Directors). Where a training programme involves multiple ROs, the lead RO will be responsible for sharing the information with partner organisations.