Developing the next generation of clinical academic health professionals and vets

Postgraduate Handbook 2025/26

Disclaimer: Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this handbook.

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Welcome

A Message from Professor Sir John Iredale GW4-CAT HP Programme Executive Director

Welcome to the Wellcome Trust funded GW4-Clinical Academic Training Programme for Health Professionals. Our Programme gives registered health professionals and vets the opportunity to undertake a PhD utilising the alliance of biomedical research expertise within the four research-intensive universities located in the southwest of the UK (Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter). The GW4 alliance offers you, as one of our doctoral students, unrivalled opportunities for development and access to our combined research strengths, training expertise and resources.

Directors and Co-Directors

**Professor Neil McHugh
GW4-CAT HP Co-Director
University of Bath**

**Professor Richard Coward
GW4-CAT HP Director
University of Bristol**

**Professor Kathryn Peall
GW4-CAT HP Director
Cardiff University**

**Professor Chris Scotton
GW4-CAT HP Co-Director
University of Exeter**

Contacts

GW4-CAT HP Team
Your first point of contact for any aspects of the GW4-CAT HP programme across the partnership is the GW4-CAT HP Programme Manager. If you have any supervisory /project issues, please let a member of the GW4-CAT HP programme team know.

GW4 -CAT HP Programme Manager
Tracey Jarvis
GW4-CAT@bristol.ac.uk
+44 (0)117 455 7589

Office Hours: 09:00-17:00 (Monday to Friday)
Hybrid working pattern working from home most days

Academic Contacts
For matters regarding academic aspects of the delivery of the programme across the partnership or within each institution, the Programme Manager should be the initial point of contact, alternatively the Co-Directors or Institutional Leads should be able to provide assistance.

University of Bath:
Co-Director: Professor Neil McHugh prsnjm@bath.ac.uk
Institutional Lead: Dr Prasad Nishtala pn403@bath.ac.uk

University of Bristol:
Director: Professor Richard Coward Richard.Coward@bristol.ac.uk
Institutional Lead: Dr Yvonne Wren yvonne.wren@bristol.ac.uk
Contact for Vet applicants: Professor Linda Wooldridge linda.wooldridge@bristol.ac.uk

Cardiff University:
Director: Professor Kathryn Peall peallkj@cardiff.ac.uk
Institutional Lead: Professor Donald Fraser fraserdj@cardiff.ac.uk

University of Exeter:
Co-Director: Professor Chis Scotton C.J.Scotton@exeter.ac.uk
Institutional Lead: Professor Angela Shore A.C.Shore@exeter.ac.uk

Institutional Contacts

Your home institution is where your senior supervisor is based.

You will need to contact your local PGR administration team before you officially start your PhD to register as a PhD student. In the first instance, contact the Postgraduate Research Administrator within your school who should be able to provide more information and further instructions. Any questions regarding annual progress monitoring and holiday allowance, for example, should be directed to these contacts.

As you will also be a member of staff, you will need to contact the relevant HR team to start the process of appointment prior to commencing your PhD in order that you can be paid. We will assist you with this.

If you are unsure who you should direct a specific query to, ask a member of the GW4-CAT HP programme team who will liaise with the institutional teams to facilitate your PhD registration and appointment as a member of staff.

Important Documentation

This handbook contains useful information about the Wellcome Trust funded GW4-CAT HP clinical PhD Programme for Health Professionals, its structure, access to training and development opportunities and useful contacts. Please read it carefully. The handbook is reviewed annually, and the most up-to-date copy will be available on our website.

It is your responsibility to understand the rules and regulations that govern your PhD, so you should also read the regulations and codes of practice for your home university, which can be access using the links below:

- **University of Bath:** [Access to the Bath Regulations for Students 2024/25 (bath.ac.uk)](#)

- **University of Bristol**: [Access to the Bristol Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programme](#)

- **Cardiff University:** [Access to the Cardiff Academic Regulations](#)

- **University of Exeter:** [Access the Exeter Post graduate pages](#)

Please also ensure you check your home university e-mail address regularly as **all communications related to your studentship will be sent to this e-mail address**.

Wellcome Trust Documentation

The Wellcome Trust require that you log onto your grant tracking link and follow the guidance that will be issued to you early in the PhD (usually around October).

Provided below are links to the Wellcome Trusts Policy documents that will be useful to you.

Grant Funding Policies

Grant Conditions

Responsible conduct of research

Regulation and Policy on working with animals

Policy on data, software and materials management and sharing

UK clinical academic training in medicine and dentistry: principles and obligations

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Research Misconduct Policy

Wellcome's Expectations of GW4-CAT HP Programme:

The Wellcome Trust funds PhD Programmes that offer health professionals outstanding research training in supportive and inclusive research environments. Programmes should address the aims of creating knowledge, building research capability, and training a diverse group of future leaders in clinical academia. The ambition is to create and support a positive, enabling, and diverse clinical academic ecosystem, through catalysing exemplar Programmes of clinical research training.

Wellcome's intended short-term outcomes:
  • To fund bold and creative high-quality research
  • To support capacity building of academic health professionals
  • To create and support positive and enabling research ecosystems

Wellcome's intended medium- and long-term outcomes:
  • To build and empower a diverse and creative clinical academic workforce that can solve urgent health challenges and bring new insights into how life works
  • To positively transform the culture that health research is embedded within

Your Title as a GW4-CAT HP funded fellow
"GW4-CAT HP PhD Programme for Health Professionals PhD Programme Fellow".
Wellcome have discouraged use of the title 'Wellcome PhD Fellow' as this term does not accurately reflect fellows enrolled on the Programme but funded from other sources.

You are expected to complete and submit your PhD within the funding window.

Personal Supervision
You will have a senior supervisor from the list of Wellcome Trust approved supervisors as well as a lead supervisor, who can be based at the same, or a different GW4 institution as your senior supervisor. Your choice of senior supervisor determines your PhD institution. In addition, you may have one or more co-supervisors, who are likely to be located at a GW4 institution other than your own. We strongly recommend that you include supervisors from at least two of the four institutions.

Regulations concerning frequency of supervisory meetings etc will be determined by the institution of your senior supervisor. It will be your responsibility to arrange meetings with your supervisors throughout the year, including those off-site, by mutual consent, however, the Programme Manager will monitor this to ensure that the supervision you receive is satisfactory.

You can be registered as a visiting student in the other GW4 Institutions, and conduct research and/or spend time there. When based at a different institution, please ensure you follow their local rules and procedures.

Clinical Adviser

As part of the GW4-CAT HP programme you are required to select a clinical adviser who should be chosen from your specialty, to support you in your career ambitions. Your adviser will offer career guidance and play a crucial supportive role throughout the PhD process. Your chosen adviser does not have to be employed by one of the four participating institutions but should be currently working within a professional capacity in your discipline.

Mentor

The Academy of Medical Sciences have useful guidance and resources outlining the benefits of mentoring throughout your career. Look at the resources available.

A GW4-Clinical Academic Training Programme Mentor and Mentee Guidance is also available on the GW4-CAT HP website.

Progress Monitoring

You will be registered for a higher degree at the home university of your senior supervisor and will be subject to their local procedures for performance monitoring, progression between years and thesis examination. Your home School will be responsible for your annual progress monitoring.

The GW4-CAT HP Directors will also conduct an annual review with you and your supervisors. This will not duplicate your home university review but will be an opportunity for the Directors to find out how you are getting on and for you to feedback on progress and any other concerns. We will prompt you regarding timing of this, but it will be your responsibility to arrange your director review.

In addition, you will be required to submit an annual data return each year detailing your activities and accomplishments so that we can report back to the Wellcome Trust.

Visiting Student Status

It is possible for visiting student status to be arranged in your secondary research institution. Please contact the relevant postgraduate administrator or the GW4-CAT HP Administrator for the necessary forms to complete. This will allow you to use their facilities (e.g., the library, courses, the gym, etc.) To be able to access the internet at each of the sites, please ensure you activate Eduroam by following your local institutional guidelines in advance of your visit or ensure secure Wi-Fi is available.

Additional Responsibilities

For the duration of your PhD, fellows can spend a maximum of 8 hours per week carrying out additional responsibilities. This includes, but is not limited to, work or clinics, teaching responsibilities and any other ad hoc work not related to your PhD research.

Conference Attendance

As a rule of thumb, we would normally expect you to attend one major overseas conference towards the end of your PhD just at the time at which you have lots of data to present (in either oral or poster form) and when you will be preparing to draft your thesis. The cost of attending a conference relating to your PhD research can be reclaimed from your travel and training budget provided it does not exceed the budget maximum. (See the finance section below.)

Conference attendance for non-Wellcome Trust related research work should not be funded from your Wellcome Trust budget. However, it is permissible to seek funding from other sources to finance attendance at these conferences.

Programme Training and Cohort Activities

The GW4 Clinical Academic Training Programme for Health Professionals has a strong emphasis on developing the skills and training you require in your journey towards a clinical academic career.

You are required to attend the introduction and induction days, training events and annual meetings, which will help to establish and develop the cohort. We will attempt to organise such events in collaboration with you to ensure that caring and other responsibilities are considered. There will be ongoing cohort-building and networking activities throughout your 3-year PhD.

Programme Introductory Days

The introductory days are for fellows newly appointed to the programme about to start on their pre-PhD year. It is designed to introduce you to the directors and the resources available within each of the GW4-CAT HP Institutions, as well as provide support and advice on how to approach developing your PhD proposal.

Research Training Induction Day

The Research Training Induction Day is for fellows that are about to embark on their PhD. It is designed as an opportunity for you to develop key skills, especially those that are necessary in the first stages of a research degree, and for you to foster connections with the other members of your cohort. It is usually a one-day event and takes place early in September. Lunch, transport costs between sites and accommodation reimbursement (if required) will be provided.

Programme Cohort Days

A number of team-building activities, training workshops and presentations will be organised within an informal setting. It is the opportunity for you to ask questions and develop your early-stage researcher networks. Attendance is compulsory unless valid reasons for absences are given to the Programme Manager in advance. Funding to attend these days will come from your travel and training budget if you have started your PhD, or we will reimburse costs if you have not yet commenced.

Research and Specialist Training

Fellows will also have access to a wide range of core and specialist training modules to support their research and career ambitions.

To ensure that each fellow can access the training they require, they will complete a training needs assessment and develop a training plan alongside their supervisory team within the first month of starting their PhD.

Additional Training Opportunities

Fellows receive £5,000 towards training and travel to be used for specialist courses or training on an individual basis.

GW4 Transferable Skills Training

GW4-CAT HP Fellows will also have access to a wide range of transferable skills training, including communication, writing skills and project management, at all the participating GW4 universities (subject to availability). Course fees and travel will be paid out of your £5,000 travel and training budget.

It is expected that Fellows will access a minimum of two transferrable skills training sessions per year as part of their GW4-CAT HP PhD.

Training for postgraduate researchers (PGR) is available at each of the respective universities use the links below to access the catalogues for each institution:

University of Bath (PGR) Training Courses

University of Bristol (PRG) Training Courses

Cardiff University (PGR) Training Courses

University of Exeter (PGR) Training Courses

The **GW4 doctoral training programmes page** also lists training opportunities available to PGR's:

You will be registered as a student and a member of staff at your host institution, which is determined by your senior supervisor location. You should also have access to a variety of academic staff development courses, including learning and research skills. This may not count for all courses at all universities so please email the relevant administrative contact to enquire about your eligibility for a specific course before booking. However, you can gain an overview of the training available to staff by using the links to each of the institutions below.

University of Bath Staff Learning and Development

University of Bristol Staff Development

Cardiff University Professional Development

University of Exeter Research Staff Development

To access workshops and training at institutions other than your own, you will need to email the relevant contact for the course that you would like to attend, explaining that you are part of the GW4-CAT HP Programme and outlining the workshop details.

Post-PhD Support
Successful fellows will be supported to seek a post-doctoral position, which is core to the training philosophy of GW4-CAT HP. Directors will liaise with the relevant bodies to identify post-doctoral research opportunities in advance of PhD completion date and this will be an ongoing part of a fellow's journey.

Finance

Your GW4-CAT HP Fellowship has been awarded for a period of 3 years (full time) from the agreed start date and pro-rata for part-time if agreed in advance by the Programme Directors and relevant Deanery (for medics and dentists). The Fellowship includes PhD tuition fees, which are paid from our grant direct to your home institution, not from your agreed consumables budget.

You will request a budget for your research project as part of the project proposal stage of the GW4-CAT HP programme. Funding of equipment is not usually included since we expect the research environment of the supervisory teams to be well provisioned. The research budget will be agreed with the programme directors after your project interview and once the final draft of your proposal has been submitted and approved. There is an expectation that the consumables budget should be between £15-35K, and all costs need to be fully justified.

As a GW4-CAT HP Fellow, you are expected to monitor your budgets in liaison with your supervisor. If you underspend your allocated budget in your first year, this can be carried over into the following years of your PhD. Similarly, if you need to draw down funds from the following year to meet an exceptional need, this can be arranged through your supervisor.

Funds to attend conferences or meetings, such as fees, travel, and subsistence, or for specialist training sessions must be taken from the allocation of £5,000 to each trainee.

If you need to spend more than £5,000 in total on training and travel, then you are welcome to vire those funds from your consumables allocations – you will not need to ask our permission to do this but you should be aware that your total funding allocation will be cash limited (i.e. we cannot provide any top ups if you overspend as our overall grant is also cash limited). We may consider a small additional allocation if you have an essential and fully justified additional training cost, however this will be an exception and not a rule.

For additional travel and training support, we strongly recommend that you consider applying to the many professional bodies and charitable organisations out there, of which

you will already either be a member or you should strongly consider becoming a member, as many of these provide very generous travel grants to their members. However, we would urge that you make sure this adds real value and does not distract you from doing your research! Your supervisors will know the relevant bodies for you to approach.

Costs Incurred for Clinical Duties

Any costs incurred as part of your clinical duties, if you plan to work to ensure your clinical skills are maintained, will **not** be reimbursed from your PhD project budget. For example, travel to an NHS clinic will not be funded, unless you have budgeted for this as part of your PhD project costs for research.

Carer Responsibilities

Each of the Universities have their own policy regarding additional financial support for primary carers. However, Wellcome have provided GW4-CAT HP with an allocation of funds to support carer responsibilities. To access this fund, please first discuss with the GW4-CAT HP Programme Manager.

The information detailed below is correct at the time of going to press.

University of Bath
Details of financial support available and eligibility for carers can be obtained by emailing studentsuccess@bath.ac.uk

University of Bristol
The University Travel, Subsistence and Expenses Policy aims to make sure that those with caring responsibilities have equal access to training and development opportunities. It covers care for both young children and elderly or disabled dependents.

Caring-related expenses are a normal expense alongside associated travel and subsistence expenses. In the first instance any claim for carers responsibilities should be referred the GW4-CAT HP Hub team.

Cardiff University
Cardiff University will review applications for additional financial support for primary carers to attend conferences on a case-by-case basis. Requests in the first instance should be referred to GW4-CAT HP hub.

University of Exeter
Exeter University recognises that attending conferences may involve extra financial burden for staff with parental or adult caring responsibilities, where they are the primary carer. In accordance with HMRC regulations, staff in that situation may claim up to £200 for additional costs incurred to enable them to attend the conference.

Expenses

Pre-PhD Year Travel Expenses
An amount of up to £150 is available for each fellow in their Pre-PhD year to claim for travel costs to partner institutions to meet potential supervisors. Reimbursement will be made from the general GW4-CAT HP budget, following the non-staff expenses claim process. To make a claim, a completed expense claim for should be submitted with supporting receipts within two weeks of travel, together with full details of the visit. You should submit this to [GW4-CAT Mailbox](#)

Fellows Representation on Management Board

As part of the GW4-CAT HP programme there is the opportunity to act as a student representative on the Management Board. One or two fellows represent the interests of all fellows on the programme. Fellow representatives will be invited to provide feedback to the Management Board about ideas, issues, and concerns on behalf of their fellow students. They may also be invited to assist in the recruitment process for future cohorts.

They will also be expected to develop a feeling of community and cohesion across the cohorts, by organising events and establishing group activities where the dates are planned in advance.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Your senior supervisor is the first point of contact for any EDI issues. They will also provide you with details of the relevant EDI representative within your institution who you can contact for further information. Alternatively, information can be found on the relevant institutional websites:

University of Bath: [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

University of Bristol: [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement](#)

Cardiff University: [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

University of Exeter: [Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

Wellcome Trust Portal

The guidance in completing the project form, detailed below, was provided to the 2023 cohort by the Wellcome Trust.

- Project details forms are required for Wellcome's reporting purposes so we can monitor what we are funding. We are not assessing these like we would other grant applications, and fellows should not be worried that this is formal assessment step.
- information that they have already produced as part of entry to the programme, or during the initial months of the PhD. It is not a progress report and does not need to be an up-to-date report of progress so far.
- Budgets are not required and these forms will be submitted with £0 budget.
- Host organisations (the university where the fellow is employed) will still need to approve fellows submissions, even with £0 costs, please factor this into the submission timelines and pre-warn research offices where possible.
- In the form there are two options for type of programme: 4Y basic PhD and PhD for health professionals – fellows should select the Health Professionals option and then select the relevant programme from the drop down box.
- Fellows career history and cv information will pull through to the form from their accounts – they should just ensure these details are up to date.
- Fellows will need to add their primary supervisor to the form as a 'sponsor' (there is no supervisor role in the system currently) and all sponsors will need to confirm participation and add their details into WFP themselves . Co-supervisors can be added directly to the section 'additional supervisors' with no requirement to confirm participation or add their details to the system.
- Fellows can add programme managers, departmental administrators etc as 'delegates' to help with the form if needed.
- Sections of the form such as animal use, human participation etc will only appear if the fellow answers 'yes' to the initial question.
- Some of the questions around clinical speciality are dependency based and follow on questions will only appear if relevant (for medics there are more questions around training programme etc, that won't be relevant to AHPs).

There are explanations and guidance within the system around how complete each section, how to add the sponsor, how to add delegates etc. For technical difficulties in the system or issues with access etc the quickest way for fellows to get help is to contact our funding support team directly at grantenquiries@wellcome.org, or via the contact details that should be visible when they are in the system.

Sharing of Data

The doctoral training programme you are undertaking includes collaboration between the GW4 universities, research organisations and other partners (including the Wellcome Trust). As a result, we may need to share information about you, which may include personal data with those partners. We will require your agreement to do this as part of the European General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679.

Your personal data is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. University of Bristol will remain a data controller for the personal data it holds, and other universities, research organisations and/or partners may also become data controllers

for the relevant personal data they receive a result of their participation with the collaborative programme of doctoral training. The processing and storage of your personal data may occur outside of the EEA.

Further information can be found on your registered University's data protection webpages. If you have any queries or concerns about the use of your personal data during your time as a student, please contact your local data protection team.

Acknowledgements

As you are in receipt of a Wellcome Trust-funded studentship, please ensure that you acknowledge the Wellcome Trust and GW4-CAT HP Programme support on all publications, presentations, exhibitions, press announcements and other similar events. If you wish to use Wellcome or GW4-CAT HP logos, such as on posters or in talks, please contact the GW4-CAT HP office.

Wellcome logos should be used as appropriate on websites, presentations, paperwork, and promotional materials. Read the Wellcome Trust Guidance

Photographs

During cohort activities, photographs may be taken which may be used for publicity purposes for the GW4-CAT HP Programme, for example on the website, leaflets and posters or disseminated via Twitter. If you do not wish to give permission, please inform the photographer at the time.

Research Culture

The GW4-CAT HP Programme supports the Wellcome Trust's Research Culture reimagining research and how we work together.

Appendix 1: Statements of Expectations

The ambitions of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the other funders who endorse this 'Statement of Expectations for Postgraduate Training' are to continue to develop highly skilled researchers to achieve impact across the whole economy, as well as developing the next generation of researchers to maintain national capability. PhD training is supported through several mechanisms; however, the principles set out below apply to all students irrespective of mechanism.

Read the Statement of Expectations for Postgraduate Training endorsed by the Wellcome Trust, UKRI and other funders.

Expectations of the Students
- Students should be actively involved in managing and directing their research project and training, taking advice from their supervisor.
- Students will be expected to develop the higher-level capabilities as outlined in the Researcher Development Statement.
- Where students get the opportunity to work in a non-academic environment, they should maximise the opportunity by seeking to understand the role of research within the organisation and the wider context.
- Students are expected to participate in training and networking opportunities provided by the funding body (Wellcome Trust and GW4-CAT HP).
- Students should complete all information/reporting requests from the funding provider and ensure contact details are maintained.

GW4-CAT HP Programme Expectations of Students
The GW4 Clinical Academic Training Programme for Health Professionals fellowship you have been offered is part of a programme that trains postgraduate students in world-class research across the universities of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter.

By accepting your offer of a GW4-CAT HP fellowship, you have agreed to abide by:
- the programme requirements as described in this Handbook.
- the terms and conditions of the funder (Wellcome Trust).
- the Wellcome Trust 'Grant Conditions' and 'Good Research Practice' guides
- the regulations and code of practice of your home institution for the duration of your doctoral studies and accept the jurisdiction of the Senate.
- submit your thesis within 3 years (or agreed FTE) of starting the programme.
- attend cohort activities when expected and to alert the Programme Team via GW4-CAT@bristol.ac.uk as soon as possible if you are unable to attend.
- monitor your consumables budget in liaison with your supervisor.

Please note, research across the GW4-CAT HP Programme is diverse and addresses issues at a wide range of levels. You are expected to respect the differing research approaches

and techniques used by colleagues and to always behave in a considerate and professional manner in your dealings with one another.

Healthy debate of research approaches and outcomes is a normal part of research and is welcomed. However, such discussions should always be conducted with respect for colleagues, acknowledging the validity of the diversity of views and approaches that can be expected in a broad programme of this type.

Appendix 2: Travelling between institutions.

Note: Times stated below are approximations.

University of Bath (BA2 7AY)

Bath Campus Map Link

- **Driving:** Most parking is permit-only or pay and display. Parking is difficult and not guaranteed, although some visitor car parks are available at the main campus.
- The University campus is out of town, so if travelling by public transport, you will need to travel from the centre of Bath to Claverton Down, via bus or taxi.
- Please be aware that central Bath is covered by a clean air zone so driving in Bath can be restrictive, so plan your journey. Alternatively travel by public transport.

University of Bristol (BS8 1TH)

Bristol Campus Map Link

- **Driving:** Most parking is permit-only or pay and display. Parking is difficult and not guaranteed. Traffic in Bristol Centre is usually very congested.
- Visit the Bristol City Council Website for information about public carparks.
- JustPark can be used to reserve a parking space in certain locations where people have rented out spaces on driveways or in private car parks, starting from £5 a day.
- Please be aware that central Bristol is covered by a clean air zone so driving in Bristol can be restrictive, so plan your journey. Alternatively travel by public transport.

Cardiff University (CF10 3XQ)

Cardiff Campus Map Link

- **Driving.** Parking at the university is limited.
- Public tariffs vary - Dumfries Place (CF10 3FN) and North Road (CF10 3DY) are the most convenient.
- Visit Cardiff's city council website for details about other public carparks.
- Parking at the Heath Hospital campus is now free for all, which can lead to delays in finding a parking space.

University of Exeter (EX4 4QJ)

Exeter Campus Map Link

- **Driving:** Parking is limited and mostly restricted to members of staff.
- Information about public car parks in the city centre can be found on the Exeter City Council website