

//Appendix 1/Pro:NE Studentship Assessment Scheme

// Purpose

- Outlined below is the assessment scheme for grading applications for postgraduate studentships and should be used to assess the strengths of each application received.
- Departments and Schools are strongly advised to familiarise themselves with this document prior to submitting nominations and to use the scheme when internally grading candidates.

// Marking Scheme

Description	Percentage	Grade	Sections Marked Out of 30	Sections Marked Out of 40
Very Strong	>80%	A*	26-30	33-40
Strong	70 to 80%	A	22-25	28-32
Fair	60-69%	B	18-21	24-27
Poor	<60%	C	0-17	0-23

// Scoring Profile

Award Type	Background, References & Qualifications	Research Proposal	Supervisory-Fit & Research Environment
Pro:NE Studentships (3 years – FT)	30	40	30

// Marking Criteria

Section	Criteria and Guidance
Background & References	<p>This section includes the qualifications and references of candidates and reviewers should focus on the candidate's potential to successfully complete their planned research. At least a good 2:1 is required at undergraduate level (or equivalent) is expected from candidates. A good Masters degree and/or significant relevant profession experience should also be recognised and can be used to show a positive academic/intellectual trajectory, particular for candidates from diverse academic backgrounds. However would accept candidates with a good first degree under certain circumstances in the context of the individual.</p> <p>Reviewers should examine previous qualifications to see if they are suitable for the candidate's project. They should focus carefully on the extent to which the references support the applicant. A strong reference will focus on the abilities of the candidate that make them most suited for postgraduate research and should support them unreservedly. A weak reference will indicate significant problems or provide 'stock' or general replies that add not value to the application.</p> <p>Please provide two references. One may be a Durham reference if the applicant is a current postgraduate Masters student or alumna. The other reference must be provided by a referee who is independent of Durham University.</p>

Research Proposal	<p>Applications should very clearly outline, articulate and explain the research questions, relevant supporting body of research in the discipline and the methodology that will be adopted, together with relevance and potential impact of the research in relation to the Pro:NE. Interdisciplinary proposals and cross-departmental collaborative working in the scholarships are welcomed. Please ensure that all abbreviations are explained in full, and that the proposal communicates the planned research effectively to a non-specialist academic audience.</p> <p>A strong proposal will have a well-defined proposal and researchable questions or hypotheses, and the candidate will have identified relevant sources, outlined and justified an appropriate methodology, show an awareness of the potential use of the research and have a feasible timetable for completing the research within three years. The proposal should normally build on and complement the candidate's CV and background.</p> <p>Reviewers should consider if the research is likely to raise ethical or safety issues, which may mean that the research cannot be approved. Furthermore, Reviewers should give particular attention to any articulation to the potential impact and knowledge exchange arising from the research.</p>
Supervisory Fit & Research Environment	<p>Applications need to address the research strengths of their host Department's discipline and those of their proposed supervisory team – including reference to publications, grants and other related research outputs – and their suitability to the student and their research project. Departments/Schools should outline how the candidate will or has obtained the key research and disciplinary training needed by them to successfully complete research within 3 years (FT). Cross-department/Faculty supervision teams are welcomed where this adds strength to interdisciplinary proposals.</p> <p>A strong application will give due consideration to the research strengths and environment of the Departments/Schools and of the candidate's supervisory team – including research centers or special facilities or research projects – that make it appropriate for the Departments/Schools and the supervisory team to host the candidate. The quality of the supervisory team is important, but so is the fit of the candidate, their project and the supervisory team's research and previous track- record of PhD supervision. A strong application will be where supervisory teams have the necessary expertise and demonstrate the active contribution to the disciplinary area. In a weak application the supervisory team will not be expert in the disciplinary area and/or the Department/School does not constitute the suitable environment in which to host the research proposed.</p> <p>Where the primary supervisor is an ECR, please counterbalance this with an experienced second supervisor and describe support that will be provided to the ECR to develop their supervision skills.</p> <p>Reviewers should check that the previous research training of the candidate is suitable for their proposed research and consider if there are any weaknesses or limitations to the support on offer to successfully completed the planned research within three years (for full-time award-holders).</p>