

Questions from the IGNITE DLA Webinar

The below questions were asked at the IGNITE DLA webinar. [Watch the webinar via this link](#). The Q&A session is not part of the recording.

Questions about IGNITE DLA	
<p>What is the duration of the project and the funding?</p>	<p>The Natural Environment Research Council funds the Doctoral Landscape Award students for 3.5 years and expects students to submit their thesis at the end of their funded period. We have worked with supervisors to ensure that projects can be completed within 3.5 years.</p> <p>If you encounter unexpected circumstances that mean you may need to ask for an extension, we have processes at the University to support you to do so. Please note that there can be implications for students on visas.</p>
<p>What training is involved?</p>	<p>IGNITE has a training programme which includes sessions on: academic skills, digital and data skills, communication your research, leadership and innovation, careers and employability. The aim of this programme is to develop your skills and support your success.</p> <p>IGNITE studentships also include a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) which is funding towards training, conferences, software, and materials for your project. The RTSG will be available during your 3.5 year funding period.</p>
<p>If I do an IGNITE DLA-funded placement, can this placement</p>	<p>Yes, it could and we encourage collaboration within our partnership</p>

<p>happen at one of the institutions co-supervising my PhD?</p>	<p>– you can use your network to leverage a placement opportunity. We ask you to clearly demonstrate that the placement project is different and distinct to your PhD.</p>
<p>Will all PhD projects start at the same time in September 2025? Can I start earlier than this?</p>	<p>The earliest start date will be September 2025 – this is when the majority of our first cohort will start.</p> <p>We understand that some might be finishing degrees so there is an opportunity to start at later date in the January or April intakes – you can let the Faculty Admissions team know if you may need to defer your start date at fels-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk.</p>
<p>What is the acceptance rate to scholarship offered by PhD project at UoS?</p>	<p>Every year is different, we have around 25 studentships to award and as specified by NERC, up to 30% of these can go towards international applicants. We typically receive 300-400 applicants.</p> <p>We encourage international students to get in contact with supervisor prior to applying to discuss their suitability to apply for the project.</p>
<p><u>Questions relating to PhD projects</u></p>	
<p>Where do I indicate my project preference?</p>	<p>In section 2 of the application form, you can state the project title and the supervisor’s name.</p>
<p>Can I apply to more than one project?</p>	<p>We do suggest applying for only one project as you can tailor your personal statement to this, but if you are applying for two projects, please state very clearly in the box which is the first choice.</p>
<p>What are the judgement criteria for an applicant-proposed project?</p>	<p>The project proposal will be evaluated in same way as our</p>

	<p>academic-led PhD projects. The project must fit within NERC remit and must be realistic to complete in 3.5 years. In terms of the rest of the admissions process – our aim is to recruit the best applicants with greatest potential for research; we are not looking to fill specific projects.</p>
<p><u>Questions about the application</u></p>	
<p>I am currently studying and will not be able to provide a certificate by the deadline. Am I able to provide an informal predicted grade from lecturers on my MSc?</p>	<p>Please provide us with the interim transcripts for your course to date. Once you have completed your course, you should submit the final transcript and certificate.</p>
<p>Should I upload my reference letters myself, or just the referee's name and contact details?</p>	<p>Please upload the contact details as our application system will automatically send a request to your reference providers. We will send information to the reference provider about what you are applying for and what information we require.</p> <p>Please make sure that you have contacted your reference provider in advance so they are aware.</p>
<p>For those applying with relevant professional experience instead of a Master's degree, should references still both be academic or should the second reference be from your relevant employer?</p>	<p>We would accept a reference from recent and relevant employers.</p>

<p>Is it possible/acceptable to change the referee?</p>	<p>Yes, please contact fels-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk to get the details changed on system.</p>
<p>At what stage would the referees be contacted?</p>	<p>Once you have entered the details into the application system – the reference provider will be contacted shortly after that point. We will send them a reminder after that if we haven't received their reference. Please contact your reference provider in advance so that they're aware.</p>
<p>How important is the role of reference letters in the admission process? Is the admission dependent on those?</p>	<p>This is something we take into account as part of minimum eligibility criteria. It is an important part of the process, and we need references that clearly know you and your academic suitability.</p> <p>However, the application decision is also based on your personal statement, your academic transcripts and other supporting documentation – all parts of the application will be considered.</p>
<p>Funding questions</p>	
<p>How long is the funding period?</p>	<p>The Natural Environment Research Council funds the Doctoral Landscape Award students for 3.5 years</p>
<p>What is the cost of living like in Southampton?</p>	<p>Information about the cost of living for students can be found here.</p>
<p>Can students work part-time alongside the PhD?</p>	<p>Many of our advertised projects are suitable to be undertaken on a part-time basis – for some projects this is not possible due to the nature of the project and fieldwork involved. We</p>

	<p>encourage you to discuss this with the lead supervisor.</p> <p>Some students get involved in demonstrating which is assisting with practical classes of undergraduate teaching - between 6 -12 hours a week and with fieldwork too.</p> <p>Additionally, if you will have a student visa, it is important to look at the restrictions associated with this - visit this webpage for more information</p>
Questions about the interviews	
<p>Will the interviews be held online or in person?</p>	<p>The interviews will all be online via Microsoft Teams. We will hold an in-person and an online visit day prior to interviews as we appreciate that not everyone can travel.</p>
<p>When will the unseen exercise be provided as part of the interview?</p>	<p>The unseen exercise will be shared with you during the interview, as the aim of the task is to demonstrate your thought processes rather than knowledge and preparation. If you require reasonable adjustments due to a disability, please let us know in advance of the interview so that we can work with you to put these in place.</p>
Questions about overseas applicants	
<p>How do I know if I am a home or overseas student?</p>	<p>To be classed as a home student, candidates must meet the following criteria and the associated residency requirements: be a UK National or, have settled status or, have pre-settled status or, have indefinite leave to remain or enter; or be an Irish National.</p>

	<p>There are some other factors which determine your tuition fee classification – please contact fels-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk if you need help determining your fee classification.</p>
<p>I am not a native English speaker but have been taught in English – do I need to do another English test?</p>	<p>If you have successfully completed a degree taught and assessed in English up to two years preceding the date of first enrolment at the University of Southampton, we may be able to accept this as evidence of your English language ability. More information can be found here.</p>
<p>When should I apply for my visa?</p>	<p>There is a financial element to applying for a visa, and you will need information about the PhD programme to apply for your visa.</p> <p>We therefore suggest applying for a visa once you receive an offer – visa applications can take some time, so we encourage you to apply as soon as you can after accepting the offer.</p>

If you have any more questions:

- Email: fels-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk for general enquiries and how to apply
- Email: nerc-dla@soton.ac.uk for questions relating to the funding, training, placements scheme, or the programme itself.
- Email: the lead supervisor of the project for further information about the project.