

Pathway Lead Role Descriptor

Introduction

The ESRC's South West Doctoral Training Partnership (SWDTP) comprises 12 disciplinary pathways and 5 interdisciplinary pathways. Each of these has a nominated Pathway Lead from each of the partners where the pathway is delivered. The Pathway Lead has an important part to play in helping the SWDTP to meet its aim of delivering high quality research training to doctoral students and this role descriptor summarises the key responsibilities of both disciplinary and interdisciplinary Pathway Leads.

Disciplinary Pathway Leads

Key responsibilities are to:

- Facilitate communication internally by disseminating information on SWDTP developments and opportunities to students and supervisors within the pathway. This will include promoting SWDTP events and initiatives such as the annual SWDTP student conference, student socials, and collaboration funds
- Represent the pathway for your institution and liaise with counterparts at the other partners to discuss and develop opportunities for collaborative research training initiatives.
- Take part in the recruitment and selection of SWDTP funded students. The requirements for this area of work will vary depending on the process in place at the partner university, but it is expected that they may include:
 - Supporting professional services colleagues in responding to queries from prospective applicants, in particular in relation to advising on research expertise for proposed projects and possible supervision arrangements.
 - Undertaking short listing and interviewing of applicants and making recommendations for nominations of studentship awards to the SWDTP Ratification Panel.
 - One additional academic attendee from one other SWDTP institution.
- Oversee the provision of supervision arrangements within the pathway to ensure that students have appropriate supervisory support throughout their studies, in conjunction with other colleagues as appropriate.
- Advise Directors of Studies for postgraduate taught programmes on aspects relating to the design of MRes with regards to SWDTP requirements and facilitate the development of student's research proposal during the MRes stage, where appropriate.
- Offer support and advice to SWDTP funded students throughout their study. This will include directing students and academic colleagues to appropriate information sources such as the SWDTP website and Student Handbook, as well as information on Overseas Fieldwork Allowance, Overseas Institutional Visits and Difficult Language Training.
- Maintain an oversight of the SWDTP student experience within the pathway and report problems to the Academic Advisory Board (AAB), where appropriate.
- Attend internal SWDTP meetings as organised by your institution.
- Attend SWDTP meetings and events including the Pathway Leads Forum, induction sessions with students, networking events, staff information days, training and development sessions, workshops, etc.
- Liaise with the SWDTP Collaboration Facilitator to develop and promote pathway initiatives with external collaborators.
- Identify gaps or opportunities in training based on responses to the Training Needs Analysis.

Interdisciplinary Pathway Leads

Key responsibilities are as above, with additional duties including:

- Assisting potential applicants with development of interdisciplinary-focused research proposals and providing guidance in identifying supervisors across at least two of the three partner institutions.
- Shortlisting applicants for interview alongside colleagues from other institutions involved in the pathway.
- Conducting joint interviews with short-listed applicants that include representatives from all of the partner institutions involved in the pathway. Making recommendations for nominations of studentship awards to the SWDTP Ratification Panel.
- Directing the MRes programme within the specific interdisciplinary pathway, including: nomination of external examiners, participation in accreditation and examination activities as applicable, assessment of teaching, annual review of the programme and monitoring student feedback.
- Co-ordinating the Contemporary Debates unit in collaboration with interdisciplinary pathway leads from partner institutions where relevant. This includes organising all lectures/lecturers for the unit, delivering the unit, marking / second marking of assignments, co-ordinating learning resources for students and gathering student evaluation feedback.
- Facilitating the external examination process through membership on the SWDTP Inter-disciplinary Board of Examiners and consideration of and joint response to the external examiner report.
- (if necessary) Assisting the first internal examiner to identify a suitable second internal examiner for the Research Board of Examiners
- Building interdisciplinary links both within and outside the home institution to develop a network of staff and students with interests in the specific pathway theme.
- Identify gaps or opportunities in training based on responses to the Training Needs Analysis

Indicative Workload Allocation

- Disciplinary Pathway Leads – 50 hours per
- Interdisciplinary Pathway Leads – 60 hours per annum