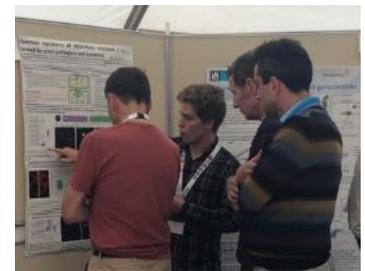


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Welcome

Welcome to the Cambridge Biosciences BBSRC Doctoral Training Partnership (CamBioDTP), your academic home for the next four years. There has never been a more exciting or important time to be involved in research in the biosciences, which provide answers to many of today's major global challenges. The various Departments across the four STEM Schools of the University and our Partner Institutes that make up the CamBioDTP — the Babraham Institute, Wellcome Sanger Institute, and National Institute for Agricultural Botany — have teamed up to establish an innovative interdisciplinary programme for postgraduate students in the biosciences. This builds on the excellent research training for which Cambridge is renowned but offers a broader experience, greater flexibility, and a more student-centred cohort-based approach than the more traditional PhD based on direct entry into a single research group.

Whether you've joined us with a specific PhD project decided in advance (iCASE, Targeted or Integrated routes) or will be following our flexible rotation-led pathway, you will all engage in the CamBioDTP Training Programme, which aims to equip you with the varied skills needed as a researcher but also to prepare you for a range of subsequent careers. You will experience working in a non-academic professional working environment – either via a Professional Internship for PhD Students (PIPS) or your industrial placement for iCASE students. Our alumni have found that this provides an invaluable experience that helps them to plan their future career trajectories. You will also directly see the ways that scientific research impacts the lives of people or the wellbeing of the planet. Our location at the heart of a global biotech cluster provides numerous opportunities for interacting with bioscience companies. As part of our BBSRC DTP3 programme, we have teamed up with *AgriTechE* and *OneNucleus*, umbrella groups for organizations involved in the AgriTech and Health related industries in the region, allowing you wider access to the real-world impacts of bioscience.

Our aim is for you to graduate in four years' time with a deep understanding and enjoyment of science and scientific research, a wide range of transferable and professional skills, and an enduring and diverse network of colleagues and friends. Our hope is that you can aspire to become a future leader in research, whether in academia or the commercial biosciences, or to use your expertise in other ways to help society meet its future challenges. Four years, as you will find out, is not long, so we hope that you will take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the CamBioDTP, by your Department or Institute, and by Cambridge more generally.

Good luck in your studies, I look forward to hearing about your progress.

Professor Ross Waller
Director, Cambridge Biosciences BBSRC DTP

September 2024

Meet the CamBioDTP Team

The Cambridge Biosciences DTP has a team of dedicated staff who are here to support you during your time here:

Training and Inclusive Support Manager (TISM)

Dr Sam Byers (sb2251@cam.ac.uk)



Dr Sam Byers is the CamBioDTP's Training and Inclusive Support Manager (TISM). She is involved in planning and delivering the CamBioDTP Training and Cohort Building events. Sam will meet with you to carry out your Training Needs Analysis to help develop a personalised training experience. She is also the CamBioDTP lead on Inclusive Support and can provide advice and signposting to the University's various support networks.

CamBioDTP Co-ordinator

Sandra Di Eleonora (bbsrcdtp@admin.cam.ac.uk)



Sandra is the BBSRC DTP Coordinator, overseeing policy implementation and processes. She collaborates with the DTP Director, serves as Secretary for the DTP Management Committee, and works with the Research Committee Chair on recruitment. As the main PIPS contact, she supports students and hosts, and organises the Annual PIPS Symposium, connecting students with industry and peers.

CamBioDTP Administrator

Yolibeth Lopez (bbsrcdtp@admin.cam.ac.uk)



Yoli is the BBSRC DTP Administrator, working closely with the DTP Coordinator to ensure the efficient delivery of the programme. She is primarily responsible for managing the financial aspects of the DTP, including setting up student stipend payments and project codes for various budgets. Additionally, Yoli oversees the maintenance of students' Je-S records and ensures the programme website is kept up to date.

CamBioDTP committees

There are three committees that oversee the successful running of the CamBioDTP. The management committee is chaired by the CamBioDTP director, Prof. Ross Waller. The education committee, which is chaired by Dr Matt Castle, and finally the Research committee, which is chaired by Dr Frank Reimann.

Overview & Getting Started

Many of you will be new to Cambridge and may find it rather different to your previous educational institutions, but you'll quickly get used to things here. You'll already be aware of your college — one of 31 that contribute to the collegiate university — and probably have your accommodation arranged by them. Your college provides you with an interdisciplinary community, and a base for social and sports activities. It is also an important source of pastoral support via your college postgraduate tutor. Something else unfamiliar might be the academic term names: Michaelmas, Lent and Easter, are the equivalent of terms 1, 2 and 3, or Autumn, Spring and Summer in other universities. You might also hear the period between Easter and Michaelmas Term referred to as “the long vacation”. Don't be misled - this really refers to undergraduate students; postgraduate students and academics get some of their best work done outside of the official Terms!

There are a number of sources of information that can help you settle into Cambridge including the [Cambridge students website](#) and [CamGuides for PhDs](#).

You should also take time to familiarise yourself with the University's [Code of Practice for Research Students](#)

CamSIS

[CamSIS](#) is the University of Cambridge student repository system. Please check your CamSIS profile to ensure it is up to date.

LinkedIn

We request that all CamBioDTP students set up their [LinkedIn](#) account. LinkedIn is a widely used professional social networking site that you are likely to continue to use through your professional life. We like to maintain contact with all our students once they have graduated from the programme. If you list Cambridge Biosciences BBSRC DTP as part of your PhD course, we will be able to follow your future success!

Je-S (Joint Electronic Submissions)

Je-S is UKRI's online portal for reporting information relating to research grants and PhD studentships.

Students **must create a Je-S account within first two weeks of arrival**. Please follow the instructions outlined in the [Je-S Handbook](#).

All stages relating to ORCID Identifiers may be skipped, and under Account Type, only “The Student” should be selected.

In the Organisation section, please choose “University of Cambridge”. If you have a standard studentship, you can select the School of Biological Sciences as your department.

After creating your account, you should receive an email that includes a link to activate it. Once you have activated the account, please log into your account by accessing the [Je-S log in page](#).

Please ensure that your account is active as the DTP office will attach your BBSRC funding details to your student account once it's created.

Please keep your personal information updated on Je-S, as UKRI will access this data for reporting purposes related to the BBSRC DTP grant.

Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre (ADRC)

We are all different and have different strengths and sometimes different needs. It is your decision whether to disclose a disability, medical condition, or specific learning difficulty, but disclosure could be necessary to identify where necessary adjustments might be made to support your PhD studies. For more information, please visit the [Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre \(ADRC\)](#) which has numerous resources to help students who might benefit from support during their studies at Cambridge.

Laptops and internet access

You will need to bring your own laptop to Cambridge. You will need access to the internet on your laptop during the induction week of the programme. For this you will need to access the Eduroam network. For information on how to do this please follow instructions at this link: <https://help.uis.cam.ac.uk/service/wifi/connect-to-eduroam>

If you do not have a suitable laptop, please contact the Training & Inclusive Support Manager Sam Byers: (sb2251@cam.ac.uk).

Once you start your full PhD, your consumables fund can be used for IT software/ upgrades if necessary. Please discuss your needs with your PhD supervisor.

Finances

Stipends

You will receive your first two stipend payments in October (at the beginning and at the end of the month). Following payments will be made towards the end of each month. Your final payment will be in August 2028. Please note that if you submit your thesis early, then [UKRI Early Submission policy](#) will be applied.

CamBioDTP funded students will have their University tuition fees paid directly from the School of the Biological Sciences. Should you need to inform your College of invoice details, they are below:

University of Cambridge

School of the Biological Sciences

BBSRC DTP office

17 Mill Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1RX

Please ensure the invoice states that it is for BBSRC DTP fees and your name.

As part of the BBSRC DTP Studentship each BBSRC-funded student is awarded:

- Up to £1,500 for consumables for each rotation project
- £15,000 for consumables for the duration of the PhD
- £920 for travel/conferences for the duration of the PhD
- Up to £1000 to support costs associated with PIPS (e.g. transport, accommodation).

These funds are paid directly to Departments and Partner Institutes. Students should therefore discuss expenditure requests with their Rotation Project and PhD Supervisors and liaise with their Department/Institute Postgraduate Administrator if they wish to use these funds.

CamBioDTP Programme Overview

The BBSRC DTP programme has three main pathways: Standard, Targeted and iCASE. For information specific to the Standard & Targeted pathways please see page [10](#). For information specific to the iCASE pathway please see page [16](#). Students can carry out research in any of the CamBioDTP Departments and Partner Institutes, but all students are registered with, and receive their award from, the University of Cambridge. For all pathways there is a comprehensive training programme available, please see page [21](#) for more details.

The CamBioDTP Programme is studied predominantly on a full-time basis for a duration of four years (although 60% and 75% part-time routes are also available). As a result, students must submit their thesis no later than **48 months** after their start date. For students starting in October 2024, the final date for submission of a thesis is **30 September 2028**.

Standard and Targeted Programme Structure

There are five key milestones that need to be met over the course of the Standard and Targeted PhD programme:

1. You will undertake two rotation projects, one in Michaelmas term and one in Lent term in your first year.
2. You will then need to write a PhD proposal which should be completed during Easter term of your first year.
3. You will need to complete a 1st Year report and viva during your second year.
4. You must undertake a PIPS placement before the end of your 4th year.
5. Finally, you must prepare a dissertation and successfully undertake a final viva after submission of your dissertation to be awarded your PhD.

Throughout the CamBioDTP programme you will engage in a comprehensive training programme and set of cohort activities alongside all other members of the CamBioDTP cohort from all pathways.

Key Dates

Michaelmas Term 2024 (Rotation 1)

- Start date: 07/10/2024
- End date: 13/12/2024
- MT rotation report deadline: 06/01/2025

Lent Term 2025 (Rotation 2)

- Start date: 13/01/2025
- End date: 21/03/2025
- LT rotation report deadline: 07/04/2025

PhD choice form deadline: 14/04/2025

Easter Term 2025 (PhD Project)

- Start date: 29/04/2025
- End date/submission deadline: 30/09/2028
- PhD proposal submission: 19/05/2025
- Submission of 1st Year Report and viva: check with your Department
- Completion of PIPS: before the end of Y4 (possible between Y2 and Y3)
- Submission of thesis: 30 September 2028.

Rotation Projects

You will carry out two 10-week rotations projects during the first six months of the programme. These rotations will allow you to gain experience of two different research environments and subsequently to make an informed choice about your PhD project (students with a Targeted project will already know their PhD lab, which will host one of their two rotations).

Before beginning the course, you will be able to contact supervisors in different Departments/Institutes to discuss possible rotation/PhD projects. Prior to arriving in Cambridge, you will have selected and confirmed your choice of project for both Michaelmas Term (October – December) and Lent Term (January – March).

Each rotation project is 10 weeks in duration and is spent carrying out research, either in a laboratory or elsewhere depending on the requirements of the project. Following the rotation project there is a two-week period to write the rotation project report. The two-week writing period is to complete the analysis and write up of data; no further research should be undertaken during this time. Further information on what to include in the project report is contained below.

Rotation Project Report

Rotation project reports will not exceed **5,000** words in length, including figure legends but excluding the bibliography (and words in figures and tables). Your **word count** (excluding the bibliography) must be given on the title page.

Reports should be properly referenced. Information on referencing can be found on the Student Registry website: <https://www.plagiarism.admin.cam.ac.uk/resources-and-support/referencing/referencing-conventions>

You must include in the report a preface with a signed statement along the following lines:

"I confirm that the material in this report is not copied from any published material, nor is it a paraphrase or abstract of any published material, nor is it copied or paraphrased from any AI-generated output unless it is identified as such and a full source reference is given. I confirm that, other than where indicated as above, this document is my own work."

Further guidance on Plagiarism, inappropriate use of AI and academic misconduct is given here: [Artificial Intelligence | Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

It is recommended that you write parts of the report alongside conducting the research. You will have a two-week writing period at the end of the rotation, but during this time you will need to submit the report to your rotation project supervisor. You should plan your time accordingly so that your supervisor has time to read the report and provide feedback and you have time to implement the feedback before the submission deadline.

Reports should be saved in .pdf format (make sure that the report has not changed once saved in this format) and emailed to the Programme Co-ordinator (bbsrcdtp@admin.cam.ac.uk) **before 12:00 (noon) on the appropriate deadline (see above)**. Hard copies are not required.

Each rotation project report will be read by the rotation project supervisor and an assessor, nominated by the supervisor, who will provide feedback and a mark.

Guidance on writing your rotation reports can be found on page 19

Starting your PhD

Work for your PhD should start in Easter Term 2025, following the submission of your PhD choice form, which will need to be submitted by **29^h April 2025**.

PhD Proposal

The first component of your PhD will be the preparation of a PhD project proposal.

PhD project proposals should be a maximum of 6,000 words in length including figure legends but excluding the bibliography (and words in tables). The word count (excluding the bibliography) must be given on the title page. Project proposals should be properly referenced and further information on referencing can be found on the academic misconduct website: www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/students/referencing/

Your proposal should be completed in time for your PhD Supervisor to read and provide feedback before final submission.

Your proposal should be submitted as .pdf (make sure that the report has not changed once saved in this format) and emailed to the Programme Coordinator (bbsrcdtp@admin.cam.ac.uk) **before 12:00 (noon) on the appropriate deadline (see above)**. Hard copies are not required.

Each proposal will be read by the PhD Supervisor and an assessor, nominated by the Supervisor, who will provide feedback and a mark.

Guidance on structuring your PhD project proposal can be found on page 19.

You will receive feedback and a mark (Excellent, Very Good, Good, or Requires Improvement) for each rotation project report and PhD project proposal. Students whose reports or proposal are marked as 'Requires Improvement' will be asked to meet with their CamBioDTP Advisor and/or PhD Supervisor to discuss training and skills development. The DTP Programme reserves the right to withdraw financial support if a student is not adequately progressing (i.e., repeatedly receiving 'Requires Improvement' marks) through the Programme.

The review process is overseen by the Research Committee who will review feedback and marks from supervisors and assessors.

1st Year Report & PhD Registration

At the start of the programme, you will only be provisionally registered for the PhD course. At some point during the second year of the Programme (exact timings differ between host Departments and Partner Institutes, but usually approximately 9 months after the start of

your PhD project) you will be required to submit a First-Year Report which will be examined in a *viva voce* examination. This process will be managed by the Postgraduate Administrator in your Department/Institute. Upon passing this, students become fully registered for the PhD, backdated to October 2024.

The role of this University-wide assessment is to determine the following:

- That your abilities as a student are matched for the programme and your project.
- That the project is based on clearly articulated aims and/or research questions, that these questions can be answered by the proposed experimental design, that the required resources are all available for the project, and that there is good likelihood of completion within 3 years of experimental work.
- If there are any academic problems that challenge the likelihood of successful completion and, if so, how these can be addressed.

Where issues are identified that challenge the likelihood of success in your PhD, our aim is to support and find solutions to overcome them, which occurs in most of such cases. However, where the student, project and programme are misaligned, recommendation for an alternative qualification can be made MPhil, MSc or CPGS (Certificate of Postgraduate Studies).

Professional Internship for PhD Students (PIPS)

A distinctive feature of the DTP programme is that all standard and targeted students undertake a 3-month internship during the 4-year PhD programme. The professional internship should be unrelated to your PhD project and provides the opportunity to experience a different professional working environment. This could be in a large company, a small start-up (of which there are many to choose from in the Cambridge area), in scientific publishing, outreach or policy development in the private, public, and voluntary sectors. Previous PIPS have been hosted by AstraZeneca, GSK, Alzheimer's Research UK, Royal Society of Biology, The Company of Biologists, The Naked Scientists, to name just a few.

The PIPS experience has been highly valued by previous students and in some cases has led to subsequent job offers from the host organization, publications, and even the know-how to spin-out a company.

We recommend that the internship should take place during the second or third year of your studies. The exact timing will depend on when it will fit with your PhD project and the availability of the internship placements within your host organization.

We run an annual PIPS Symposium, open to CamBioDTP students from all years, where you can hear about previous PIPS experiences from both the student and host organization perspectives and meet with representatives of potential hosts. This is a dynamic cross-cohort event and is often held at the Babraham Innovation Campus, which houses over 55 bioscience companies.

You will continue to receive your stipend throughout the internship and there are some funds available (up to £1000) to cover expenses related to PIPS such as for travel or accommodation. Sometimes, the host organisation might also contribute to the cost of your expenses.

Some companies have their own policy regarding internships; for instance, some host organisations have a policy of employing and paying all interns at standard rates. If this is the case, we are happy to approve the PIPS, but UKRI rules stipulate that the CamBioDTP stipend is suspended for the duration of the paid internship.

The CamBioDTP Team will provide support throughout the process on an ad hoc basis.

Before starting your PIPS, you must submit the following forms via Moodle:

- Host approval form (if the Host is not on the approved organisation list)
- Taking PIPS abroad form 1 (if the internship is based outside the UK)
- Project Description
- Project Financial Support
- Project Skills Development Objectives
- Taking PIPS Abroad Form 2 (if applicable)

You will also need to apply for 'Leave to Work Away' via your CamSIS self-service.

Your proposal will be assessed by the Training and Inclusive Support Manager (TISM) before being approved. If there are any concerns about the appropriateness of a placement then, in the first instance, an informal discussion will be held between you and the TISM to resolve these concerns. If an informal discussion is not able to resolve the situation, then the Chair of the training committee will intervene and make a final decision. In a small number of cases, proposals are not approved if they do not appear to offer suitable training opportunities.

Post PIPS Report

You will need to complete a report of your PIPS experience within 2 weeks of the end date, for the Cambridge DTP.

The report is designed to help you reflect on your experience and identify the achievements and personal development you have gained from your PIPS. If you would like to discuss your further personal development, you are welcome to book a one-to-one session with the Training and Support Inclusive Manager (Sam.Byer@admin.cam.ac.uk).

If you are undertaking placements with multiple hosts, you must complete a report for each host within 2 weeks of the end date of each placement. The DTP office will re-open the assignment for you, please send an email to the office to request this. Do not delete your first report! Just add another file to your submission.

Further information and all the relevant forms are available on Moodle.

Progression and Completion of PhD

Funding from the CamBioDTP is contingent on satisfactory reports of progress submitted by your PhD Supervisor, and completion of PIPS (Standard and Targeted) or industrial placement (iCASE).

All supervisors are required by the University to provide a termly feedback report for the students they supervisor. Students can access this report by logging into CamSIS, clicking

on “Students and staff” and then view reports. In addition, students are encouraged to submit a self-evaluation report on CamSIS during Michaelmas Term.

Students will be expected to complete the relevant host Department or Partner Institute PhD progression procedures (for more information contact your departmental/institute postgraduate administrator) including the First Year Assessment (see above).

Before the end of the fourth year, students must have completed and submitted their thesis for examination (below).

PhD Thesis Submission and Viva

You are expected to submit your PhD thesis within 48 months of the start of the course i.e. September 30, 2028. The *viva* exam will usually be held within 3 months of submission and will involve one internal (i.e. University of Cambridge) and one external examiner from another university. The CamBioDTP also organises a Thesis and Viva Preparation workshop during the final year of the Programme.

Leaving CamBioDTP early

For those students who do not proceed to the PhD degree, there is the option of converting to one of the following:

- MPhil by dissertation
- Certificate of Postgraduate Studies (CPGS)—not openly available but can, in some circumstances, be awarded by the Degree Committee for Biology

The exact route will be determined after discussion with your project supervisor, the CamBioDTP Programme Office, and the agreement of the Research Committee.

iCASE Programme Structure

There are four key milestones that need to be met over the course of the iCASE PhD programme:

1. You will then need to write a PhD proposal which should be completed during Michaelmas term of your first year.
2. You will need to complete a 1st Year report and viva by the end of your first year.
3. You must spend between 3-18 months working at your industrial collaborative partner's organisation.
4. Finally, you must prepare a dissertation and successfully undertake a final viva after submission of your dissertation to be awarded your PhD.

Throughout the CamBioDTP programme you will engage in a comprehensive training programme and set of cohort activities alongside all other members of the CamBioDTP cohort from all pathways.

The two major structural differences between the iCASE pathway and the Standard and Targeted pathways are

1. You won't undertake first year rotations, and you will immediately become a member of your PhD host department, and
2. Since you have an industrial collaborative partner you will not undertake a PIPS.

Key Dates

- Submission of PhD Proposal: 06/01/2025
- Submission of 1st Year Report and viva: Check with your Department
- Undertake Industrial placement: before end of Y4
- Submission of thesis: 30 September 2028.

PhD Proposal

The first component of your PhD will be the preparation of a PhD project proposal in Michaelmas 2024.

PhD project proposals should be a maximum of 6,000 words in length including figure legends but excluding the bibliography (and words in tables). The word count (excluding the bibliography) must be given on the title page. Project proposals should be properly referenced and further information on referencing can be found on the academic misconduct website: www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/students/referencing/

Your proposal should be completed in time for your PhD Supervisor to read and provide feedback before final submission.

Your proposal should be submitted as .pdf (make sure that the report has not changed once saved in this format) and emailed to the Programme Coordinator (bbsrcdtp@admin.cam.ac.uk) **before 12:00 (noon) on the appropriate deadline (see above)**. Hard copies are not required.

Each proposal will be read by the PhD Supervisor and an assessor, nominated by the Supervisor, who will provide feedback and a mark.

Guidance on structuring your PhD project proposal can be found on page 19.

Feedback and Progression onto PhD

You will receive feedback and a mark (Excellent, Good, Satisfactory or Requires Improvement) for your PhD project proposal. Students whose reports or proposal are marked as 'Requires Improvement' will be asked to meet with their PhD Supervisor to discuss training and skills development. The DTP Programme reserves the right to withdraw financial support if a student is not adequately progressing (i.e., repeatedly receiving 'Requires Improvement' marks) through the Programme. The review process is overseen by the Research Committee who will review feedback and marks from supervisors and assessors.

1st Year Report & PhD Registration

At the start of the programme, you will only be provisionally registered for the PhD course. At some point towards the end of the first year of the Programme (exact timings differ between host Departments and Partner Institutes, but usually approximately 9 months after the start of your PhD project) you will be required to submit a First-Year Report which will be examined in a *viva voce* examination. This process will be managed by the Postgraduate Administrator in your Department/Institute. Upon passing this, students become fully registered for the PhD, backdated to October 2024.

Industrial Placement

The industrial (or more generally, non-academic) placement is the unique feature of iCASE projects. In addition to your principal academic PhD supervisor, you will also have an industrial supervisor. Your PhD project should be planned so that it is a genuine

collaboration between the academic and industrial partners. You should plan to spend between 3 and 18 months working in the industrial collaborator's facilities (these minimum and maximum periods are stipulated by UKRI BBSRC). This could be a single period, or it could be broken up across several visits. You should plan this based on the scientific needs of your project.

The industrial partner is expected to support all expenses associated with your work while on placement. This includes additional expenses (such as travel and accommodation) incurred as a direct result of attendance at the premises of a company. This includes the cost of flights in the case of overseas companies.

Post Industrial Placement Report

You will need to complete and submit via Moodle a report of your Industrial placement experience within 2 weeks of the end date. If your placement involves multiple visits, you should arrange a meeting with the Training and Support Inclusive Manager at the conclusion of each visit and submit your final report by the end of your placement.

The report is designed to help you reflect on your experience and identify the achievements and personal development you have gained from your Industrial placement. If you would like to discuss your further personal development, you are welcome to book a one-to-one session with the TISM (sb2251@cam.ac.uk)

PhD Thesis Submission and Viva

You are expected to submit your PhD thesis within 48 months of the start of the course i.e. September 30, 2028. The *viva* exam will usually be held within 3 months of submission and will involve one internal (i.e. University of Cambridge) and one external examiner from another university. The CamBioDTP training programme (see below) will provide preparation for both PhD thesis writing and the viva.

PhD Reports Guidance

Rotation and First Year Report Structure

Reports should be broken down into summary, introduction, methods, results, and discussion.

Introduction: this section should give the non-specialist reader, **in a concise manner**, the background information necessary to understand your project. It should not be a full literature review. Rather, it should provide sufficient information for the reader to clearly understand: the research aims and questions that you will address; why these aims and questions will be useful to the rest of your research field; how they might have potential wider economic, societal or cultural impact (www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/apply/application-guidance/pathways-impact/); and the approaches that you will take to answer these questions. A good introduction will also excite your reader to know of your research outcomes.

Methods: this section should **be concise** yet contain sufficient information to allow someone else to repeat the work: give priority to novel approaches and condense standard molecular methods by citing previous publications or manufacturer's instructions.

Results: this section should flow as a logical, coherent description of the results of your experiments and analyses, including the rationale for doing each experiment (i.e., the explicit research question(s) being addressed). This will not necessarily be in the order in which you carried out the experiments. Provide figures and tables as the supporting evidence for the descriptions of your results. Remember that this is a report of what you did in your rotation, not a paper for publication: don't just put in your best (or only positive) results, but discuss problems encountered and/or troubleshooting.

Discussion: this section **should NOT be a repetition** of the Results section but should critically evaluate the possible interpretations and conclusions of your results and their significance in relation to published works, which should also be critically appraised. It will usually contain ideas of further work required to clarify your findings or address outstanding or newly identified questions. This is a valuable inclusion in a project report where you may not have had sufficient time to complete the research as you might have wished.

PhD Proposal Structure

The proposal should be broken down into aims, background, methods and experimental design, controls, and budget, plus any health and safety considerations.

Aims of the project: this section should be succinct, with perhaps a few sentences of overview explaining the general focus and then listing some specific objectives/goals.

Background: this section should set the scene for the research, so needs to be a summary of the relevant literature, perhaps beginning more broadly and getting more specific. It may include some preliminary unpublished data from your work or from other work in the lab if it is relevant. It may also include some diagrams or pictures of data if they are helpful. You should explain the impact of this research (see section Rotation Project Reports). We suggest that about one-third of the proposal might be background, but there is no set rule.

Experimental design and methods: this section should describe your plan of investigation. It is often helpful to subdivide this into sections. These might represent sequential steps in the investigation (e.g., genetic screen; molecular characterisation of genes; etc.) or parallel approaches (e.g., loss of function studies; gain of function studies; etc.) or different questions to be addressed (e.g., Does X regulate Y? Is Y essential for mesoderm development?). See what works best for your proposed work.

Remember to think about issues such as: what controls you will use to test for alternative explanations for your observations, or the assumptions your methods are based on; do you foresee any pitfalls and if so, how might you circumvent them if they arise; what are your back-up plans in case this project fails to work out as expected?

You should include a **timeline**, flow diagram, or GANTT chart to show you have a realistic idea of how long each part of the project is likely to take. **For iCASE projects only** this should include the initial indication of the periods of time that will be spent with the industrial collaborator.

Plagiarism, AI and Academic Misconduct

The University of Cambridge defines academic misconduct, broadly as any action which gains, attempts to gain, or assists others in gaining or attempting to gain unfair academic advantage. It includes plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, and fabrication of data as well as the possession of unauthorised materials during an examination.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are becoming increasingly sophisticated and widespread. The University's guidance on AI currently states: **“A student using any unacknowledged content generated by artificial intelligence within a summative assessment as though it is their own work constitutes academic misconduct, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the assessment brief.”**

The CamBioDTP Training programme includes a module on Plagiarism and Copyright (see below). For more information visit the [Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct](#) webpage.

CamBioDTP Training Programme

Our training program is designed to help you build skills through hands-on experiences and practical development. It starts with a core skills module in Year 1, followed by a set of thematic training pathways in Years 2-4. Each training pathway consists of a mix of structured activities, workshops, and projects that will enable you to develop and put into practice technical, analytical and transferable skills, all of which are valuable for a wide range of careers in science and technology. The program also includes regular self-assessments to help you track their progress, identify areas for improvement, and shape your own learning journey.

Cohort Building is an essential component of our programme, since we believe it creates a more supportive environment where you can flourish and build interdisciplinary networks. We organise at least three annual cohort events for all year groups, including the PIPS Symposium and the Annual Symposium. The Annual Symposium is a highlight of the DTP calendar; it is organised by you (usually once you are in your second year) and features research presentations (talks and posters) by students from all years, and a series of keynote presentations from prominent invited speakers illustrating a variety of scientific and career perspectives.

Training programme structure

Year 1: Core skills

In Year 1 each student undergoes an initial training needs analysis, using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. Together with the Training and Inclusive Support Manager, they create a personalised training plan.

Activities and seminars include:

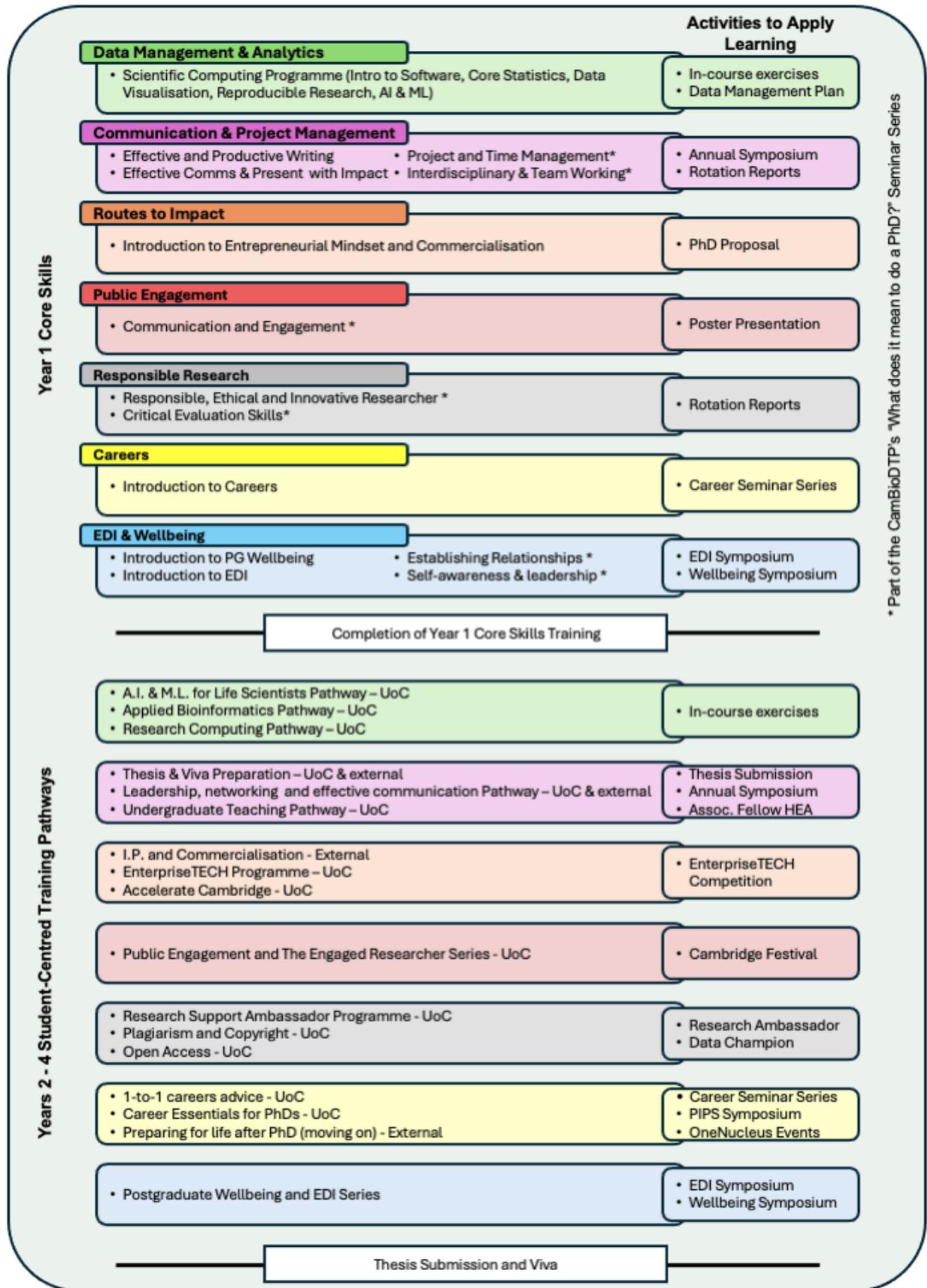
- Data Management and Analytics: Scientific Computing Programme (Intro to Software, Core Statistics, Data visualisation, Reproducible Research, AI and Machine Learning)
- Communication and Project Management: Effective and Productive Writing; Effective Communications and Presenting with Impact; Project and Time Management; Interdisciplinary and Team Working
- Effective Literature Searching
- Routes to Impact: Introduction to Entrepreneurial Mindset
- Responsible Research: Responsible, Ethical and Innovative Researcher; Critical Evaluation Skills
- Careers: introduction to careers
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Wellbeing: Introduction to Postgraduate Wellbeing; Introduction to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Establishing Relationships; Self-awareness and Leadership

Years 2 – 4: Student-centred training pathways

In Years 2 to 4, students choose from various themed training pathways, some offered in collaboration with non-Higher Education Institution partners. They decide when and how to engage with these opportunities in consultation with the Training and Inclusive Support Manager and their supervisor during their annual training needs analysis.

Pathways and courses include:

- AI and Machine Learning for Life Scientists
- Applied Bioinformatics
- Research Computing
- Thesis and Viva Preparation
- Leaderships, Networking and Effective Communication
- Undergraduate Teaching
- IP and Commercialisation
- Enterprise TECH Programme
- Accelerate Cambridge
- Public Engagement and Engaged Researcher
- Research Support Ambassador Programme
- Plagiarism and Copyright
- Open Access
- 1-to-1 Careers Advice
- Careers Essentials for PhDs
- Preparing for life after PhD
- Postgraduate Wellbeing and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion



Interdisciplinary Research Networks

You will have many opportunities to experience the vibrant academic and commercial research environment in Cambridge. The University promotes interdisciplinary research via [Strategic Research Initiatives and Networks](#) and [Interdisciplinary Research Centres](#), which bring together researchers from across the University to tackle global challenges. These initiatives run seminar series and other events of interest often involving industrial as well as academic contributors. Just two examples are:

- the [Cambridge Academy of Therapeutic Sciences](#) (CATS), in collaboration with Translation Manchester (Univ. Manchester) runs a [Gateway to Translation](#) monthly webinar series highlighting the latest upcoming research, technology and development in pharma, MedTech and biotech sectors.
- [Plants@Cambridge](#) provides a focal point for all Plant Science based research in Cambridge, including Departments, Institutes (NIAB, Crop Science Centre, Sainsbury Lab), the Botanic Garden and the [Global Food Security](#) IRC.

Associate Partners

As Part of our DTP3 programme for cohorts starting in 2023 and 2024, we have teamed up with two Associate Partners who are umbrella groups for commercial and academic biosciences organizations in our region. The two organizations are complementary, with One Nucleus serving the healthcare and pharma sectors, while AgritechE serves the region's agrotechnology sector. Both organizations provide networking, training, and career development opportunities for PhD students. We encourage all our students to sign up with at least one of these Associate Partners, which facilitate interactions with the many companies within the Cambridge Biotech Cluster.

One Nucleus

[One Nucleus](#) is a not-for-profit Life Sciences & Healthcare membership organisation headquartered in Cambridge. Providing local, UK-wide, and international connectivity, complemented by practical support on operational, investment and technology trends, One Nucleus seeks to enable our members to maximise their performance. Events of interest to students include the annual "Building Life Science Adventures" careers conference that attracts some of the most exceptional employers, students, early career seekers and universities.



To access the benefits of One Nucleus membership, you'll first need a website user account. You can sign up for one [here](#). Be sure to select University of Cambridge as your employer (and do not create a new one) so your membership can transfer to your account. If you have any questions, please contact info@onenucleus.com.

Agritech-E

Agritech-E is a business focused member-led organisation, supporting the growth of a world-leading network of innovative farmers, producers, scientists, technologists, and entrepreneurs who share a vision of increasing the productivity, profitability, and sustainability of agriculture. Together we aim to help turn challenges into business opportunities and facilitate mutually beneficial collaboration.



The Agritech-E Early Career Innovators' Forum (ECIF) is a platform that unites early-career individuals interested in agricultural innovation through a diverse programme of networking and knowledge-sharing activities that are free to attend.

Being part of the ECIF Programme will allow you to:

- Explore innovation across various areas of agriculture
- Develop your professional network by connecting with other early career individuals
- Acquire valuable tools and resources to help you thrive professionally in the agricultural industry

ECIF provides a welcoming, friendly, and informal environment where you will meet other researchers, graduates, and professionals from a variety of backgrounds including academia, agronomy, engineering, consultancy, farming, and tech development.

For further info or to sign up to the ECIF Programme contact AgriTechE: info@agri-tech-e.co.uk

Student representation and feedback

Student feedback and input is key to the success of our training programme. A key feature of our governance structure (see Annex 2) is student input via the Training Committee to facilitate ongoing monitoring, adjustments and improvements to the programme. We have two student reps from each year, who attend three consultative meetings and one full meeting of the Training Committee each year. A call for student reps will be made during your first term. Please consider volunteering for this important role!

Student Support and Wellbeing

Life as a PhD student can be stressful and demanding at times. Two key things to bear in mind are:

- The importance of a healthy Work Life balance. Most researchers are highly motivated and want to devote a lot of time to their research. However, it's also important to take time out for social and leisure activities to keep the mind and body healthy.
- Recognise that you are never alone. There are numerous support mechanisms available to students, starting with your Rotation Project and PhD Supervisors and the DTP Training and Inclusive Support Manager.

The University has a comprehensive [Student Support](#) webpage that is an excellent first port of call for information about the various sources of support related to physical and mental health, wellbeing, academic, and financial issues, as well as links to a variety of student communities.

CamBioDTP Training and Inclusive Support Manager

Dr Sam Byers, the BBSRC DTP Training and Inclusive Support Manager can be contacted via email and is available to offer help, guidance, and support throughout your time in Cambridge. Sam can also put you in touch with other people and/or groups within the university as appropriate.

Email: sb2251@cam.ac.uk

DTP Adviser

Each student will be allocated a member of the Research Committee to act as a DTP adviser for the length of their studies. This role is to provide supplementary support, operating independently from both the supervisory team and the Department/Partner Institute. The DTP adviser's primary responsibilities encompass the following:

- Serving as an accessible resource for students seeking general academic guidance
- Maintaining an open-door policy for discussions regarding research progress, personal development, and research-related requirements

You should meet your DTP adviser at least once and ideally on a termly basis during your first year joining the DTP. Meetings in subsequent years are discretionary and the need can be discussed between you and the DTP Adviser.

These informal meetings can be held online or in person. We encourage you to contact your DTP adviser to schedule your first meeting, ideally in person, as soon as you arrive in Cambridge.

College Pastoral Support

Your college is responsible for your pastoral support and there are several different people in College who you can turn to for help and advice. In the first instance, students will be

assigned a Postgraduate Tutor, who is normally a Fellow of the College and will take an interest in your wellbeing and progress. Postgraduate Tutors, as well as the College Senior Tutor, can offer advice on academic, social, financial, medical, and personal matters. Tutorial Office staff, student MCR Welfare Officers and, where available, the College Nurse, Chaplain and College Counsellor can also provide pastoral care and help to students.

University Counselling Service and Student Support

The [Counselling service](#) supports students who are experiencing personal, relational or academic concerns, offering meetings with counsellors, and [group workshops](#).

Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre

If you're a disabled student, or if you're unsure and feel you may have a disability the [Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre \(ADRC\)](#) can help to identify adjustments to assist you during your studies. The ADRC provides confidential advice and support for new and existing postgraduate and undergraduate students.

Communities

Building and participating in communities is an important part of the PhD experience and can be crucial to help you manage stress and achieve completion of your studies. Below is a (non-exhaustive) list of established communities within Cambridge that can provide support:

- Cambridge student union
- International Student Office
- Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre (ADRC)
- LGBT+ Campaign
- BME Campaign
- Women's Campaign
- Cambridge AWiSE
- Student Parents and Families Support

Societies

Maintaining interests outside your PhD research is important for wellbeing. There is a wide range of student societies in which you can participate. A list of all societies can be found via the [Registered Clubs & Societies](#) homepage. More information relating to sporting activities can be found via the [Sports societies](#) webpage

University Requirements for Progression

Progression and Completion of PhD

Funding from the CamBioDTP is contingent on satisfactory reports of progress submitted by your PhD Supervisor, and completion of PIPS (Standard and Targeted) or industrial placement (iCASE).

All supervisors are required by the University to provide a termly feedback report for the students they supervise. Students can access this report by logging into CamSIS, clicking on “Students and staff” and then view reports. In addition, students are encouraged to submit a self-evaluation report on CamSIS during Michaelmas Term.

Students will be expected to complete the relevant host Department or Partner Institute PhD progression procedures (for more information contact your departmental/institute postgraduate administrator) including the First Year Assessment (see above).

You will initially be provisionally registered for the award of PhD. At some point during the second year of the Programme (first year for iCASE students) students will be required to submit a report (First Year Report) which will be examined in a viva voce examination. This process, the exact timing of which varies between host Departments and Institutes, will be managed by the Postgraduate Administrator in your Department/Institute. On passing this, students become fully registered for the PhD, backdated to October 2024.

Before the end of the fourth year, students must have completed and submitted their thesis for examination. The CamBioDTP also organises a Thesis and Viva Preparation workshop during the final year of the Programme.

Leaving CamBioDTP early

For those students who do not proceed to the PhD degree, there is the option of converting to one of the following:

- MPhil by dissertation
- Certificate of Postgraduate Studies (CPGS)—not openly available but can, in some circumstances, be awarded by the Degree Committee for Biology

The exact route will be determined after discussion with your project supervisor, the CamBioDTP Programme Office, and the agreement of the Research Committee.

Intermission, Parental Leave, Annual Leave

Students who are unable to work on their project for medical or other reasons can apply to intermit (a complete break from study). Applications must be made via an application form, which is available from their CamSIS self-service page. Further information can be found at: <https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/postgraduate-study/your-student-status>. Students who have a university authorised period of medical intermission will continue to receive their stipend for up to 13 weeks, within any 12-month period. Although students funded from UKRI training grants have no legally defined entitlement to maternity, paternity, or adoption leave, UKRI BBSRC does provide funding for such leave. Please click the link provided below for UKRI policies: [Support for UKRI Studentship Holders | Cambridge students](#)

Stipend payments may need to be suspended or amended during periods of absence (e.g., medical intermission beyond 13 weeks, non-medical intermission, parental leave, etc.).

Students must therefore inform the DTP office (bbsrcdtp@admin.cam.ac.uk) if they have applied for an intermission or any other changes in circumstances.

Annual Leave

Students are entitled to a total of eight weeks of annual leave. Due to the structured nature of the first year of the Programme, it is not possible for students to take annual leave outside of the designated holiday periods in December, Easter, and during the summer months. In subsequent years of the Programme, periods of annual leave should be taken at times agreed with the PhD Supervisor.

Part Time options

It is possible to convert from full time to part time (PT) study at either 60% or 75% of full time (FT). However, there may be practical challenges to consider, including engagement with the cohort and training programme and with your PhD project. We strongly recommend that you discuss well in advance any plans to convert to PT with both your supervisor and the DTP Training and Inclusive Support Manager. In addition, your stipend will be reduced *pro rata* if you convert to PT.

Paid employment

Full-time students are permitted to undertake up to eight hours paid employment per week during their studies, usually teaching (demonstrating or supervising). However, we would advise that you do not work during the first year of the Programme.

Student and Supervisor Charters

CamBioDTP has expectations of both its students and supervisory teams outlines in the respective charters below

CamBioDTP Student Charter

Students will:

- Be integral members of the Department / Partner Institute they join.
- Treat all fellow students, staff, and visitors with respect, observing the DTP's core values of diversity and inclusiveness.
- Create a Je-S account within the first week of October.
- Always Act as ambassadors for the BBSRC DTP programme and the University of Cambridge.
- Be aware of and adhere to good research practices and behave professionally.
- Have intellectual ownership of, and assign top priority to, their PhD to enable thesis submission within the 4-year timeframe, considering the time required to complete rotations, PIPS, or industrial placement as per the programme of which they are part.
- Recognise that engaging with the training programme, including the PIPS, is a compulsory part of the DTP programme.
- Report to their supervisor and BBSRC DTP Co-ordinator any issues likely to impact on their ability to undertake their PhD work.
- Attend BBSRC DTP organised training and cohort activities and take responsibility for their own development by attending courses, journal clubs, conferences.
- Engage with scientific literature.
- Respond to requests from the BBSRC DTP Programme Office in a timely fashion and submit all reports and documents by the agreed deadlines.
- Familiarise themselves with literature relating to their PhD studies, both scientific and administrative, including the BBSRC DTP guidelines and the University of Cambridge Code of Practice for Research Students.
- Understand that non-compliance might result in exclusion from the DTP programme.

Supervisor Charter

Supervisors will:

- Assign high priority to students and their rotation and/or PhD research to ensure thesis submission within the 4-year timeframe.
- Regularly monitor student progress and meet with students to discuss their development and/or research project on a regular basis (at least fortnightly and ideally weekly).
- Recognise that student attendance at BBSRC DTP training and cohort building sessions is a condition of student funding, and to support students to get the most from these opportunities.
- Work with the student to develop their research aims throughout the course of the PhD and provide the necessary resources (including sufficient lab space, computational resources, all essential materials, and consumables funding) and clearly delineate risks and back-up plans.
- Provide an environment where good research practice is the norm. Mentor students in the scientific method and encourage them to present their work at conferences and write scientific papers.
- Understand that PIPS is a compulsory and integral component of the BBSRC DTP that is distinct and independent of the students' PhD project, allowing them to experience a different professional working environment:
 - Be supportive of students during their selection of PIPS.
 - Discuss during the first term of the PhD suitable timings for the PIPS to help reduce disruption to the student's PhD research project.
 - Release students from all work related to their PhD during PIPS.
 - Ensure the student is informed of any important information or training they may have missed during PIPS.
- Respond to requests from the BBSRC DTP Office in a timely fashion and support the student to submit all reports and documents by the agreed deadlines, and to attend events relevant to their development.
- Engage with the BBSRC DTP Programme Office by providing written feedback on student rotations and/or PhD reports and termly CamSIS reports by the deadlines provided and ensuring that assessors you have nominated also provide feedback by the agreed deadlines.
- Familiarise themselves with the BBSRC DTP and the University of Cambridge [Code of practice for Research Students](#)
- Have attended Postgraduate Supervisor training and continue to engage with professional development activities to support postgraduate supervision (e.g. Mental Health awareness, Unconscious Bias, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion).
- Be aware that an individual Supervisor can accept no more than one DTP PhD student in any single year and supervise no more than two PhD DTP students at one time.
- Be prepared to contribute to the DTP e.g. by volunteering to help with admissions.
- Understand that failure to comply with the above points may result in their research group being excluded from hosting future BBSRC funded students

ANNEX 1 Complaints Procedure

Overview: Cambridge Biosciences BBSRC DTP (CamBioDTP) students are covered by the University of Cambridge (UoC) [student complaints and appeals systems](#), which extend to all aspects of the student experience. In addition, procedures for quality assurance, supervisory standards, student support and resolution of complaints are established for PGRs via the [Code of Practice for Research Students](#). The UoC complaints and appeals system operates through informal resolution in the first instance (Stage 1), with the option of being followed up by formal university resolution procedures (Stage 2). The CamBioDTP complaints procedure falls within informal resolution procedures (Stage 1). UoC procedure stipulates that complaints should be raised as soon as possible and at least within 28 days of the matter arising.

Complaints raised via the CamBioDTP process may concern direct CamBioDTP provision (e.g. DTP training, PIPS). Complaints related to a student's home department/institute will initially be dealt with via established local procedures. However, as the studentship grant-holder we have an interest in the welfare of our students so students should feel free to raise any concerns via our process (particularly Stage 1, informal discussion). For department/institute-based complaints that escalate to Stage 2, we expect the host departments/institute to inform CamBioDTP as the body responsible for admitting their BBSRC-funded students and allocating BBSRC studentships.

Stage 1 Informal Discussion: Many problems can be solved locally without a formal process. In the first instance we encourage CamBioDTP students to raise potential problems with either the Training and Inclusive Support Manager, or their DTP academic mentor. As an alternative, they may approach the DTP Coordinator. If the problem cannot be resolved informally, they can proceed to a Stage 1 Complaint, either within the CamBioDTP process or within the host department/institute, as appropriate.

The following step relates only to complaints made within the CamBioDTP process:

Stage 1 Complaints: Complaints specifically about DTP-related issues should be raised in writing with the Director. If there is a conflict of interest, then another member of the Executive group (Director, Chairs of Research & Training Committees, DTP Coordinator, SBS Deputy Head of School – Postgraduate Education) will step in. The complaint will be shared with all non-conflicted members of the Executive group, who will review the student's complaint within 10 working days, taking whatever additional evidence is needed. Based on the outcome of that review, the Director will provide a response to the claimant that: (i) provides redress, if possible; (ii) sets out steps for ensuring future quality of provision; or (iii) dismisses the complaint.

If the complainant remains unhappy with the outcome, they may then open a formal Stage 2 resolution request via [UoC complaints procedures](#).

Records: The DTP will keep records of all complaints and will review them on an annual basis at the end of each academic year (September), with the aim of identifying and resolving any ongoing systematic problems.

Policy last reviewed July 2024

ANNEX 2 CamBioDTP Governance

Governance of CamBioDTP has input from all Partners, student representation via the Training Committee and administrative support from the School of Biological Sciences. This structure is designed to be robust and agile, facilitating ongoing evaluation and improvement in response to student feedback and programme monitoring.

Our **Management Committee** (MC) meets quarterly, providing strategic oversight and monitoring progress against programme objectives. It receives and responds to reports from two operational committees — Research and Training — the latter providing student input. EDI is a standing agenda item with the TISM taking the lead.

The **Training Committee** (TC) is the key venue for student input and is chaired by Dr Matt Castle (Head of Cambridge Centre for Research Informatics Training), with Dr Sam Byers (CamBioDTP Training and Inclusive Support Manager) as Secretary. The TC is responsible for all aspects of training, PIPS placements and cohort building activities, and manages the budgets for these activities. The TC also generates and considers proposals for use of the DTP Flexible Supplement Fund. The committee includes **8 student representatives**, 2 from each cohort, facilitating ongoing monitoring and improvement of the programme in response to student feedback. Academic membership is drawn from across the Partnership to provide complementary expertise. The TC previously met three times per year. To improve effectiveness of student engagement, in 2023-25 we are trialling a structure with 3 student consultative meetings attended by all student reps, Sam Byers and Matt Castle. The full membership of the TC will meet annually to review the training programme and agree upon any changes. We will review the new mode of operation in summer 2025 and decide whether to continue or return to the previous format.

The **Research Committee** (RC) oversees all aspects of student recruitment, admissions, and progression through to registration for the PhD after successful completion of the 1st year assessment (see also Approach). Membership includes representatives from all Hosting Partners and participating UoC Schools. The RC ensures that all students have an appropriate research environment by vetting and selecting potential rotation and PhD projects & supervisors, and ensuring that:

- proposals are within BBSRC remit
- students have access to all essential facilities, including in iCASE placements
- the supervisor is experienced or will be mentored appropriately (new supervisors).

The RC reports to the MC after annual recruitment rounds, including data on Widening Participation (WP) throughout the recruitment pipeline and distribution of PhD projects between BBSRC Research Themes and Partners, and advises on potential alterations to future admissions rounds based on this data. The committee has 8 annual meetings to conduct its business including a dedicated annual meeting to discuss updates to WP and EDI policies.

The dedicated SBS-funded CamBioDTP Team comprises the Coordinator (Sandra Di Eleonora), Administrator (Yolibeth López de Arcia) and Dr Sam Byers (TISM). The team deals with all administrative matters, including support to the committees, monitoring, and data collection. It meets formally on a weekly basis to discuss live issues, with the Director in attendance. The team is supported by additional specialist expertise on finance, grants administration, website, and social media from within the SBS and the Research Operations Offices, with further support by PGR administrators in constituent departments of all Partners, and by a central UoC DTP administrators forum. A small Executive Group

(Director, Coordinator, Chairs of RC and TC, and SBS PGR lead) interacts frequently on an ad hoc basis, providing the agility to take necessary decisions between scheduled committee meetings.

Our **External Advisory Board** (EAB) meets annually with our Executive Group, monitoring progress and providing invaluable critical advice. Membership provides expertise from other UKRI BBSRC DTPs and the biotech sector.