

SURE International Faculty Exchange

2017 Guidance Notes

The 301 Student Skills and Development Centre, part of the Student Services Department, funds a number of SURE research scholarships each year.

The SURE scheme offers the opportunity for undergraduate students to become directly involved in the research activity of the University, take part in 'real life' research projects in subject areas that are of special interest to them, and experience what it's like to work in partnership with academic staff or collaboratively in a research group. Student researchers will also develop transferable skills in areas such as project management, become more aware of the academic research environment and related career opportunities, and improve their employability.

The International Faculty Exchange section of SURE offers a funded opportunity for an undergraduate student based in the International Faculty of the University of Sheffield to travel to Sheffield to work in partnership with an academic staff member on a dedicated research project during the summer vacation.

In many cases, SURE offers academic staff the opportunity to develop an area of their own research. This could be in a one-off piece of research, or something that directly feeds in to an existing project.

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Eligibility to apply

SURE International Faculty Exchange is open to all students currently registered on an International Faculty undergraduate course. However, students **cannot be in their first or final year of study**, or have received a SURE scholarship in previous years. Previously unsuccessful applicants can reapply to the scheme as long as they are still eligible (e.g. a student on a 4 year course who was unsuccessful in their 2nd year can reapply again in their 3rd year).

A SURE bursary is not classed as 'employment', therefore any student can apply for funding even if they do not currently have a legal 'right to work' in the UK.

Two supervisors are required to apply jointly; one must be from the International Faculty, and one based in Sheffield. Supervisors must be employed by the University, either as an academic or research associate with demonstrable experience of supervising student research. Supervisors must also be available to support the student researcher during the six week project (though for occasional absences, a second supervisor can be nominated).

Whilst we hope that staff and students will produce a project proposal in partnership, academic supervisors may apply to SURE prior to securing the agreement of a student researcher. However, funding is offered on the understanding that an eligible student will be fairly appointed before the project is due to start. **SURE is not responsible for appointing student researchers.** Academic supervisors must also attend any briefing events that take place before they have recruited their student researcher, and ensure that key information is imparted to the student once appointed.

We advise students to contact academic staff with similar research interests to their proposed project. Please note that SURE does not keep a list of supervisors and it is the student's responsibility to approach academic staff. There is a list of previously funded projects on our [website](#) which may be a useful first point of reference.

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Application process

All applicants must apply using the generic application form:

<https://goo.gl/forms/OXL0QFV1MfGpjTvq1>. Guidance on how to complete the form is also available. We would strongly recommend that applicants read the guidance notes before completing the form, as any errors or omissions may delay the processing of applications.

Please note that only one SURE application will be considered per student or member of staff. Please do not submit multiple applications. If multiple applications are submitted, the first submission will be accepted and subsequent submissions will not be considered. This is to ensure fairness to all applicants and promotes applications of the highest quality, outlining the best possible projects.

We only accept electronic applications so please do not send hard copies to the SURE office. Two supervisor's email address must be submitted. Failure to do so may delay the processing of applications, as these emails are being accepted as student and staff member signatures and declaration of support.

The deadline for submitting your application form is Friday 24 February 2017 (12pm noon). Late submissions will not be considered.

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Funding decisions and criteria

All applications are sent to the SURE Bursary Funding Panel for their consideration.

Funding Criteria

Each panel will utilise the criteria below when making SURE bursary decisions.

Your **project outline** should therefore demonstrate:

- Interesting and innovative research ideas;
- a clearly defined objective, which could form part of a much larger research activity;
- an authentic research activity in the subject discipline, whether desk-based or empirical;
- a clearly-defined and meaningful role for the student, providing them with a worthwhile research experience;
- realistic aims and objectives that are achievable within 6 weeks (i.e. the hypothesis is sensible and the facilities, student skills and equipment are all available during the time period);
- clear and well thought-out project outputs, with a clear dissemination plan for the outcomes of the project within and beyond the department;
- it is not part of the normal programme of work for the student.

Your **supporting information** should include input from both student and supervisor (if a student has been identified at this point in the process):

Students should:

- Explain why you want to carry out this project and why you are a suitable candidate (considering your abilities and motivations, for example)
- Explain why you want to carry out this project and what the impact will be on your current academic career and beyond.

Supervisors should:

- Outline how your project will contribute to your own research and/or your department's research culture, and the experience it will provide an undergraduate researcher
- Provide information endorsing why the student is suitable to work on the project, considering their aptitude, ability and interest (if applicable)
- Include details of the intended support provision for the student (i.e. supervisory arrangements, training and skills-development opportunities available, opportunities for the student to engage with the research community of the department)

The above criteria will be used to determine whether or not projects are deemed fundable. If the number of fundable projects exceeds the funding available, the Panel may consider how projects fit with departmental and Faculty research priorities in order to decide which will be awarded bursaries.

Project outlines should also be clear and concise, and avoid technical ‘jargon’ or specialist language that may be difficult for someone unfamiliar with your area of research to understand. In particular, we advise that you keep within the word limit (500 words – references are not included in the word count).

The supporting information should demonstrate the value of the project to the student. The panel are unlikely to fund a proposal where the student’s contribution appears limited or menial, or if it would be more appropriate for the supervisor to complete the work themselves.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome by Friday 21 April 2017.

The decision of the panel is final and there is no opportunity to appeal. Due to the volume of applications that are reviewed, unfortunately it is not possible to provide detailed individual feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

There will be a briefing for all successful SURE applicants on **April 26, 2017**. This will be made available online.

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Project outputs

The project structure, aims and objectives will be determined by the student researcher and/or academic supervisor. However, students are expected to produce two project outputs:

- a final report
- dissemination of the research

The aim of SURE is to provide students with a genuine research experience. Consolidation and reflection is a key part of this process, therefore we ask each student researcher to submit a report at the end of their project. There are no restrictions on the structure or layout of the report; however, we do ask if they can be within an 800-1000 word limit. We will provide a training session on this as part of the SURE Community (please see ‘support for student researchers’ for further information). Academic supervisors are expected to discuss the report with their student, and provide comments and feedback before the final submission to the SURE team.

All students are also expected to disseminate their research at the SURE Showcase the following year. Approaches to this may include producing a poster, giving a PowerPoint presentation, podcasting, or writing an article for a professional journal. Academic supervisors should provide advice and guidance to student researchers on appropriate dissemination methods for their project. Outstanding disseminations will be celebrated at

the SURE Showcase with the presentation of several SURE Awards. We understand that attendance at the Showcase may not be possible for a student based in the International Faculty, but the dissemination piece will be displayed at the event on their behalf.

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Project start and end dates

It is mandatory that both the student and academic researcher sign a Terms & Conditions form and agree to adhere to these and any other guidelines issued by the SURE team throughout the duration of their involvement in the scheme.

Bursary payments will not be made under any circumstances until this form is completed and returned to us.

We would expect most SURE projects to start on **Monday 12 June 2017** and finish by **Friday 21 July 2017**. However, we understand that in some cases this may not be possible. It could be that an academic supervisor is away at the start or end of the project, or students have a holiday or field trip booked during the normal six-week period.

Applicants will be asked to confirm a project start and end date on the application form. If projects need to start or end slightly later, please provide a valid reason. Please take into consideration that:

- a project cannot start before Monday 12 June 2017 or finish after Friday 4 August 2017
- the academic supervisor (or a nominated secondary supervisor) must be available and willing to supervise during the chosen period
- students may miss some of the SURE Community events and additional support sessions for student researchers
- start and end dates cannot be changed from those stated on the application form

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Bursary payments

SURE bursaries are paid in two instalments. The first (70%) is paid at the end of the first week of your project. Students will receive the second instalment (30%) within two weeks of submitting their final report and evaluation form. Academic supervisors are also required to submit an evaluation form at the end of the project.

Bursaries are awarded based upon the standard rate of £180 per week (up to a maximum of £1,080 for a six week full-time project).

Applications for shorter research projects are welcome, but they must take place within the same period as the other SURE projects (i.e. start on or after 12 June 2017 and finish no later than 4 August 2017). This is particularly applicable to those who do not have holiday in the regular vacation period (e.g. students from the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and

Health). Part-time students receive funding on a pro-rata basis. It is not possible to receive extra funding even if the project takes longer than six weeks.

Students will be asked to upload their bank details via MUSE. If students would like payments to be made to an overseas bank account, completion of an additional form will be required (available upon request from a member of the SURE team). Please note that payments made to an overseas bank account will take slightly longer to process.

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Claiming for additional costs

Each SURE project may request up to £150 for additional costs (£500 for lab-based projects). This could include material costs (e.g. stationery, photocopying, text books, USB stick), journal or newspaper subscriptions, travel expenses (e.g. train tickets, bus or taxi fares), or entrance fees (e.g. museum exhibition, art gallery). **We are not able to reimburse any commuting costs associated with projects.**

All planned expenditure must be outlined in the application. Funding is allocated based on every aspect of the project proposal, therefore it is unlikely that participants will be able to claim for any other additional expenditure at a later stage, so please be as accurate as possible. Note that the cost of producing dissemination posters for the SURE showcase is covered by the scheme, so this cost does not need to be factored into planned expenditure.

There are different procedures for standard and lab-based expenditure claims:

- Expenditure up to £150 – non-staff claim form

This will be available to download from the [SURE website](#). Completed forms should be returned to the SURE office (Reception, 301 Glossop Road) along with the original itemised receipt(s). **Due to strict University and Government regulations, it is not possible to reimburse any expenditure that is not accompanied by original receipts.**

Expenses are reimbursed separately to the bursary payments, so students will need to submit their bank details again. Academic supervisors can simply include their payroll number.

As a guide, it usually takes around 4 weeks from submitting the form to the SURE office to being reimbursed for expenses. However, we are unable to guarantee this timeframe. Incomplete forms will cause a delay in receiving payment.

- Lab-based consumables expenditure up to £500 – Cost centre creation

Note that for lab-based projects, the additional funding available is to cover the cost of lab consumables only. For successful applications that are awarded lab consumable funding, academic supervisors will be provided with a cost centre code for the project just before the project is due to start. Approver rights to this cost centre will be given to a relevant

member of staff within your department, who has the necessary authority to make cost centre approvals on the University's financial system.

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Intellectual property rights

It is important that students and supervisors are both aware of the importance of intellectual property rights. For further information, please visit the University website: <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/lets/pp/policy/ip> (*Regulations relating to Intellectual Property are available as a download on the right hand side of the page.*)

Where a student researcher has made a significant contribution to an area of a study (data collection, analysis etc.), they should be offered authorship or acknowledgements (as appropriate) on any resulting publications.

It is the responsibility of those undertaking the research to ensure that all internal guidance and Government legislation is adhered to.

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Ethics

Students and supervisors must both be aware of the importance of any ethical issues surrounding your project. This may include considering the safety or vulnerability of participants and yourselves as researchers. You will be asked to indicate on your application form if you expect the project to require ethics approval.

Please note that it is the department's responsibility to secure an ethics approval and the SURE team is unable to secure this on your behalf.

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Support for student researchers

A range of opportunities will be available for SURE students to socialise with each other, share experiences, and exchange useful research tips and ideas.

The SURE Community includes:

- Training sessions - e.g. report writing, poster presentations, digital media, maths and statistics help etc.
- A mid-point celebration evening— an opportunity to meet other SURE students and discuss projects.
- Weekly chatroom support and information sessions
- SURE 2017 Twitter Community – an opportunity to share pictures and research progress

In addition to signing up to training events offered through the SURE period, we also would recommend some self-preparation prior to the project start date, such as devising a structured timetable or programme of work with your supervisor or finalising practicalities (e.g. work space/access to printing etc.)

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The role of the academic supervisors

One of the defining aims of the SURE scheme is to offer students the chance to work in collaboration with academic staff and develop their research skills. For many students, this is their first experience of working on a research project, and they are likely to require considerable support during the early stages. We would therefore recommend that all academic supervisors are available during the first few weeks, and where necessary offer a structured induction for their students. It may also be useful to consider any practical arrangements in advance (e.g. workspace/seating arrangement, access to printing etc.)

Once the project is up and running, the level of supervision is left to the discretion of the supervisor. However, we would recommend nominating a second supervisor if you are going to be away at any point during the project. You may choose to nominate a PhD student, as it would provide them with useful supervision experience.

Students are invited to attend a training session on how to prepare for their final report, though they may still require academic supervisor guidance in final weeks of the project. If supervisors are likely to be away at this time, we would suggest having a detailed programme in place for the student and their second supervisor.

We hope that supervisors will also promote the SURE Community events and actively encourage their students to take part in the wide range of events and opportunities available.

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Travel and Accommodation

Accommodation and travel costs will be covered by SURE. Accommodation will be booked directly by 301, and an expenses form will be provided for the student to claim the cost of flights. Accommodation will be booked at the Exchange Works:

<http://www.unitestudents.com/sheffield/exchange-works?src=ppc&gclid=CLQ6LaDztACFbMW0wodLD4PLw&gclsrc=aw.ds>.

Students are required to organise their own travel insurance.

Any further questions

Whilst we have tried to cover everything in these guidance notes, you may still have some queries or questions. You can contact a member of SURE team at:

surescheme@sheffield.ac.uk

We receive a large number of emails during the application stage, so we ask that you please allow us a couple of days to get back to you.