



[REDACTED]

2 December 2024

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2024/01076

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 12 November in which you requested the following:

Your request:

In September 2023, I requested information on the total number of UKRI-funded PhD starters – by research council, and by nationality – for 2018-19 to 2022-23. While the data was very comprehensive I wasn't able to get complete data for 2022-23 as many institutions had not yet returned their information (with the academic year ending on 30 September 2023).

I am keen to get hold of the complete data set for 2022-23, and for 2023-24, which I hope will now be available given it is more than a month since the end of the academic year. I enclose the data set from last year, so you could see what format I would like to receive the data.

In summary, could I please find out for 2022-23 and 2023-24:

How many UKRI-funded PhD students commenced their studies in 2022-23, and 2023-24 respectively.

Please state how many of these were international students – giving separate figures for EU and non EU students, and how many were UK students.

Please provide this data for UKRI but also for each research council.

Our response:

I can confirm that UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) holds information relevant to your request. Please see the information below.

Data on UKRI-funded international doctoral students for academic year 2018/19 through to 2023/24 is provided at Annex 1. We have included figures back to 2018/19 as some of this data has changed since our previous response since providers can edit the information or a studentship at any point after it is added to the system. Please note, figures for the most recent year (2023/24) are still likely to be incomplete, as there is typically a fairly substantial lag in some provider's reporting (this varies by year, so it is not possible to adjust for).

This data identifies studentship starts grouped by nationality for the UK, EU and other international, and by research council.

The information provided relates to nationality only, as UKRI does not hold information relating to a students' domicile status, or their eligibility to be treated as a home student for all the requested academic years. In some instances, non-UK nationals are eligible to be treated as home students, for example, where they have settled status, pre-settled status, or indefinite leave to remain in the UK. UKRI does not normally ask Research Organisations (ROs) to report this information.

If you have any queries regarding our response please do let us know. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review, explaining which elements of this decision you disagree with and why. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of our response and should be addressed to:

Head of Information Governance

Email: foi@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by UKRI. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: www.ico.org.uk.

If you wish to raise a complaint regarding the service you have received or the conduct of any UKRI staff in relation to your request, please see [UKRI's complaints procedure](#)¹.

Yours sincerely,


Information Governance
Information Rights Team
UK Research and Innovation
foi@ukri.org | dataprotection@ukri.org

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>

Annex 1 – Freedom of Information request: FOI2024/01076

Total UKRI-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 1,425 | 21 | 1,180 | 20 | 1,140 | 19 | 860 | 15 | 865 | 16 | 790 | 15 |
| Other International | 360 | 5 | 295 | 5 | 340 | 6 | 1,025 | 18 | 1,180 | 22 | 1,145 | 22 |
| UK | 4,820 | 70 | 4,155 | 71 | 4,185 | 70 | 3,495 | 61 | 3,125 | 57 | 2,915 | 57 |
| Not Disclosed | 245 | 4 | 190 | 3 | 280 | 5 | 320 | 6 | 270 | 5 | 265 | 5 |
| Total | 6,850 | 100 | 5,820 | 100 | 5,945 | 100 | 5,700 | 100 | 5,440 | 100 | 5,115 | 100 |

AHRC-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 190 | 19 | 125 | 18 | 115 | 17 | 100 | 15 | 110 | 16 | 80 | 13 |
| Other International | 20 | 2 | 10 | 1 | 15 | 2 | 105 | 16 | 140 | 20 | 110 | 18 |
| UK | 660 | 65 | 515 | 74 | 505 | 73 | 420 | 62 | 365 | 53 | 330 | 53 |
| Not Disclosed | 145 | 14 | 45 | 6 | 55 | 8 | 50 | 7 | 75 | 11 | 100 | 16 |
| Total | 1,015 | 100 | 695 | 100 | 690 | 100 | 675 | 100 | 690 | 100 | 620 | 100 |

BBSRC-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 105 | 18 | 105 | 19 | 120 | 21 | 65 | 13 | 80 | 15 | 80 | 15 |
| Other International | 10 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 15 | 3 | 100 | 19 | 120 | 22 | 120 | 23 |
| UK | 485 | 81 | 420 | 77 | 430 | 74 | 350 | 67 | 335 | 61 | 310 | 58 |
| Not Disclosed | 0 | 0 | 10 | 2 | 15 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 15 | 3 | 20 | 4 |
| Total | 600 | 100 | 545 | 100 | 580 | 100 | 520 | 100 | 550 | 100 | 530 | 100 |

EPSRC-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 670 | 23 | 545 | 21 | 525 | 20 | 405 | 16 | 345 | 15 | 335 | 17 |
| Other International | 240 | 8 | 190 | 7 | 220 | 8 | 465 | 19 | 510 | 23 | 475 | 23 |
| UK | 1,990 | 67 | 1,750 | 68 | 1,785 | 67 | 1,500 | 60 | 1,310 | 58 | 1,150 | 57 |
| Not Disclosed | 65 | 2 | 90 | 3 | 130 | 5 | 140 | 6 | 90 | 4 | 65 | 3 |
| Total | 2,965 | 100 | 2,575 | 100 | 2,660 | 100 | 2,510 | 100 | 2,255 | 100 | 2,025 | 100 |

ESRC-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 165 | 21 | 165 | 23 | 130 | 18 | 110 | 15 | 105 | 16 | 90 | 13 |
| Other International | 30 | 4 | 35 | 5 | 30 | 4 | 170 | 23 | 160 | 25 | 185 | 27 |
| UK | 550 | 71 | 515 | 71 | 520 | 72 | 455 | 60 | 365 | 57 | 375 | 55 |
| Not Disclosed | 25 | 3 | 10 | 1 | 45 | 6 | 20 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 35 | 5 |
| Total | 770 | 100 | 725 | 100 | 725 | 100 | 755 | 100 | 645 | 100 | 685 | 100 |

MRC-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 115 | 25 | 80 | 21 | 90 | 22 | 65 | 19 | 75 | 21 | 60 | 17 |
| Other International | 15 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 15 | 4 | 55 | 16 | 65 | 18 | 75 | 22 |
| UK | 325 | 71 | 270 | 72 | 285 | 70 | 200 | 59 | 210 | 58 | 195 | 57 |
| Not Disclosed | 5 | 1 | 20 | 5 | 20 | 5 | 20 | 6 | 15 | 4 | 15 | 4 |
| Total | 460 | 100 | 375 | 100 | 410 | 100 | 340 | 100 | 365 | 100 | 345 | 100 |

NERC-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 75 | 15 | 60 | 15 | 55 | 15 | 35 | 9 | 45 | 11 | 55 | 12 |
| Other International | 15 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 10 | 3 | 60 | 15 | 80 | 19 | 80 | 18 |
| UK | 405 | 81 | 320 | 82 | 295 | 81 | 280 | 71 | 280 | 66 | 295 | 66 |
| Not Disclosed | 5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 20 | 5 | 20 | 5 | 15 | 3 |
| Total | 500 | 100 | 390 | 100 | 365 | 100 | 395 | 100 | 425 | 100 | 445 | 100 |

STFC-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 55 | 17 | 55 | 17 | 55 | 18 | 35 | 12 | 65 | 21 | 60 | 21 |
| Other International | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 30 | 10 | 40 | 13 | 50 | 18 |
| UK | 265 | 80 | 250 | 78 | 245 | 79 | 190 | 66 | 180 | 59 | 165 | 59 |
| Not Disclosed | 5 | 2 | 10 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 35 | 12 | 20 | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| Total | 330 | 100 | 320 | 100 | 310 | 100 | 290 | 100 | 305 | 100 | 280 | 100 |

Other UKRI-funded students with UK, EU or other nationalities commencing studies by academic year

| National Grouping | 2018/19 | | 2019/20 | | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/2024 | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| EU | 50 | 24 | 40 | 21 | 55 | 26 | 45 | 20 | 40 | 19 | 35 | 19 |
| Other International | 20 | 10 | 35 | 18 | 30 | 14 | 40 | 18 | 70 | 33 | 45 | 25 |
| UK | 140 | 67 | 110 | 58 | 125 | 60 | 105 | 47 | 80 | 38 | 95 | 53 |
| Not Disclosed | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 35 | 16 | 20 | 10 | 5 | 3 |
| Total | 210 | 100 | 190 | 100 | 210 | 100 | 225 | 100 | 210 | 100 | 180 | 100 |

Background Information

1. Counts in each category have been rounded to the nearest multiple of five and their respective percentage portion rounded to whole values, in accordance with UKRI policy. Due to this, proportions may not add up to 100%.
2. Data on student nationality has been extracted from UKRI's main studentship data, which is submitted and maintained by the ROs through which students are funded, in line with our reporting standards. Nationalities that were not reported by ROs are indicated as "Not Disclosed". (Data extracted 14/11/2024 based on 4 October 2024 UKRI Single Source of Data snapshot).

3. The “UK” national grouping includes the UK, as well as Isle of Man, Guernsey, Jersey and Gibraltar. The “EU” group is made up of the 27 countries that were EU nations at the time of the analysis. All other nations are defined as “Other International”.
4. The “Other UKRI” council group includes cross-council funding programmes such as the Strategic Priorities Fund or Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.
5. Nationality should not be confused with domicile, or eligibility to be treated as a home student. Some non-UK nationals are eligible to be treated as home students (for example where they have settled status, pre-settled status, or indefinite leave to remain). As noted, above, UKRI does not normally ask ROs to report information on the domicile of student applicants.
6. Academic years (AYs) are taken to run from 1 October to 30 September in the following year. Studies are considered to have commenced when a student had a funding start date in that year.

Specific notes on the data provided

7. In October 2020, UKRI made changes to [EU and international eligibility for UKRI funded studentships from academic year 2021/22](#)² onwards. Previously, international and EU students who did not meet UK residency requirements were eligible for fees-only awards. There were some opportunities specified by research councils for EU and international students to be fully funded on particular awards. The new policy across all UKRI training grants now offers international students a full UKRI studentship, which covers a student stipend and home-level fees.
8. A small number of students had more than one studentship record starting on the same date in an academic year. These were treated as duplicates and only one counted for each instance.
9. Fluctuations in numbers may need to be understood in the context of specific programmes starting and ending.
10. Figures for the most recent AY (2023/24) are likely to be incomplete, as not all ROs have yet reported final information.

² <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/UKRI-030221-Guidance-International-Eligibility-Implementation-training-grant-holders-V2.pdf>