**Annex B – Supervisor Supporting Statement for 2023 Entry**

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| **SWDTP Supervisor Supporting Statement** | |
| **Student name**: | |
| **Title of research proposal** | |
| **Lead supervisor,** department, institution and discipline (must be from an SWDTP partner university) | |
| **Second supervisor,** department, institution and discipline (must be from an SWDTP partner university) | |
| (optional) **Third supervisor,** department, institution and discipline | |
| **For interdisciplinary pathways** (only):  For interdisciplinary pathways it is a requirement that the lead and second supervisor are from clearly different disciplines and that they both bring expertise that will be used to support the student. Please state how these criteria are fulfilled and how both supervisors will be fully involved in the supervisory process (indicative length, 150 words). **It is important to note that applications to an interdisciplinary pathway that show little evidence of genuine and sustained interdisciplinary supervisory support are likely to be rejected.** | |
| Please confirm that the supervisory team meets the requirements of the SWDTP: this is that one or both of the supervisors has supervised at least one UK based PhD student from their start to a successful completion: **YES / NO**  Please also confirm that the Lead Supervisor meets any requirements that the host institution sets locally on who is or is not eligible to take on this role: **YES / NO** | |
| **Name of SWDTP Pathway(s) student is applying to** (see <https://www.swdtp.ac.uk/prospective-students-and-fellows/esrc-funded-studentships/>):  *(For Information) The maximum number of applications an applicant can make to the SWDTP in any one year is two. This may consist of two applications to the same Pathway in different institutions (e.g. Education in Bath and Exeter), two applications to different Pathways in the same institution (e.g. both Human Geography and Psychology in Plymouth) or two applications to different Pathways in different institutions (e.g. Education in Bath and Human Geography in Plymouth). However, the applicant can only make one application to any one Pathway in any one institution (they cannot, for example, make two separate applications to Economics at the University of Bath).* | |
| **Please indicate *if* this proposal addresses one of the three ESRC strategic steers** *(proposals do not have to address any of these steers)*: | |
| Advanced Quantitative Methods (AQM) (if discussed and agreed with AQM Pathway Lead at your institution) |  |
| Use of ESRC datasets (including details of which dataset and how familiar the applicant is with that data. If a student is funded under the dataset steer, then this must be a robust part of their project as it cannot be changed at a later date |  |
| Interdisciplinary awards research which straddle other UKRI research council remits – if yes, state which research council/s |  |
| **Please detail any resources and/or research facilities required in the project (e.g., equipment, software or surveys).**  **NOTE: the SWDTP Hub cannot provide any funding for access to facilities/equipment that are not available at the institutional level. Access to appropriate computing facilities (over and above a student’s own laptop) should be provided by the institution.** | |

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| **SUPPORTING STATEMENT (to be written by the Lead Supervisor)** |
| Your supporting statement **should not exceed 500 words** in total – this is a strict maximum. There is no set format for the statement but areas you should address are: why the proposed research is a good fit with you and the second supervisor, and also the broader institutional context; what is innovative about the proposed research and ‘why it matters’; the feasibility or otherwise of the research with an expectation and clear commitment to supporting its completion within a 3-year funding period; any observations about the strengths (and/or weaknesses) of the proposal; **and, in the case of interdisciplinary applications, what makes it genuinely interdisciplinary**. |
| Please give your assessment of the overall quality of the proposed research and how it is presented in the prospective student’s application. It is important that you are honest and realistic and that your assessment matches the criteria below. **Please note that you are grading the proposal as written, you must not grade the applicant or their past attainment.**  A+ – Truly outstanding. The research proposal is exceptionally well-written with a sharpness and clarity to the research question, how it relates to existing knowledge within the field, and outlining genuine methodological innovation and/or theoretical sophistication in how the topic will be researched. It has the potential to be truly ground-breaking. **As a rule of thumb, the applicant is in the top 1% of applications.**  A – Excellent. The research proposal is very well-written with a sharpness and clarity to the research question, how it relates to existing knowledge within the field, and with methodological innovation and/or theoretical sophistication in how the topic will be researched. This is exciting, novel and original research but not quite as ground-breaking as for the higher rating. **As a rule of thumb, the applicant is in the top 10% of applications.**  B – Good or Very Good. The research proposal is well-written, with clarity to the research question and how it relates to existing knowledge within the field. The proposed methods of research are well aligned to the research topic. The research will add effectively to the field but lacks the truly original ‘wow factor’ of the higher ratings. This is still a strong application. **The majority of applicants should score B.**  C – Adequate. This is a proposal that you are willing to supervise and that outlines an achievable PhD. However, it is more ‘pedestrian’ and/or lacking in flair/originality/innovation/clarity where compared to the higher grades.  D – Inadequate. Only assign this grade if you have strong reservations about the proposed research, its viability and/or its suitability for ESRC (or part-ESRC) funding (for example, if there is no social science component). This grade will likely lead to the application being rejected. |
| Please delete as applicable: A+ / A / B / C / D  *You are reminded that not every application can be exceptional and suggesting that they are when you know that they are not could end-up harming the student’s prospect of being funded.* |
| **EITHER ONE OR OTHER OF THE FOLLOWING (4.1 or 4.2 – NOT BOTH)**  **4.1 Collaborative, Impact and Engagement Elements**\* - important factors include relevant external partner identified, collaboration plan (with partner), impact and awareness of opportunities and challenges that external collaborations bring. Various relevant ESRC links include:   * Collaboration and knowledge exchange https://esrc.ukri.org/collaboration/ * Impact https://esrc.ukri.org/research/impact-toolkit/   *[\*****NOTE:*** *The ESRC continue to emphasise the importance of collaboration with non-academic public, private and civil-society sector organisations. Applications should highlight any relevant forms of knowledge exchange and collaborative working with an external (non-academic) public, private or civil-society sector organisation e.g., Co-funding, Internships, Placements or Contribution in terms of time, resources, access to data, etc. Collaboration must include substantive knowledge exchange and not just one-way engagement (e.g., data collection)]*  **4.2 Ambitious and novel research proposal** - important factors include novelty/fresh ideas, new concepts / techniques with the potential for significant scientific or societal and economic impact, innovative or even untested methods within the context of the particular project, involving multiple or unusual disciplinary combinations both within and beyond the social sciences, and accessing difficult/challenging data or generating new data in challenging settings.  **Important note re international students: ESRC will fund international students at the home fee and stipend rate. This does not cover the difference between the UK rate and the international fee set by universities. Please ensure that international applicants are aware they may be asked to pay the difference if a fee waiver is not in place at your university.****Students will also beexpected to pay their own travel costs, visa fees and other associated costs.** |
| Please provide a brief summary **of no more than 150 words**, outlining if the student should be considered under 4.1 or 4.2 above, and why. |
| **If it is anticipated that the proposed project might include activities that pose a risk to the student’s mental well-being, please highlight this here and outline what support structures will be put in place to ameliorate the risk. You should also highlight any potential need for professional/clinical mental health support over and above what is available at an institutional level. Finally, please confirm below that you have had a conversation with the student about these issues. The information will not inform the initial scoring of the application, but we reserve the right not to offer funding to proposals where the risk to student mental health and well-being has not been adequately considered.** |
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| Please confirm that the research proposal is wholly or substantively the applicant’s own work. Where this is not the case, please outline why and the level/nature of the involvement that you (or others) have had in its formation |
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| **Signature:**  **Date**: |