Scottish Graduate School of Social Science
Sgoil Cheumnaichean Saidheans Sòisealta na h-Alba

SGSSS-DTP Postdoctoral Fellowship (PDF) Stage One Competition Marking Framework (2026/27)

	Fellowship Proposal (OUT OF 10)	Candidate Record (OUT OF 10)	Mentoring & Research Environment (OUT OF 5)

	Considering
	• **Case for support**
	  ○ **Abstract/Summary of Progress**
	  ○ **Objectives for Fellowship**
	  ○ **Impact Generation**
	  ○ **Planned Programme of Activities**
	  ○ **Career Development**
		Considering
		• **Academic CV**
			Considering
			• **Mentoring Arrangements**
			• **Mentor Statement of Support**

10	As (9) but proposal is exceptionally good in all of its elements. Quality of work programme, impact and outputs are strong. Specified objectives are achievable and realistic within the time available. Proposed activities support the applicant's longer-term career aspirations.	As (9) but, taking career stage into account, an exceptionally good overall CV. An excellent candidate who is likely to flourish with fellowship funding.	
9	As (8) and all elements are very well-defined and very clearly developed.	As (8) but an excellent CV with a number of clearly identifiable strengths.	

8	As (7) and all elements are well-defined and clearly developed.	As (7) but a very good CV with at least one obvious strength.	
7	A good proposal with appropriate work programme, impact and outputs, achievable and realistic objectives and fit with applicant's career aspirations.	A candidate with the achievement or expectation of a PhD meeting ESRC eligibility requirements for the PDF scheme. Taking career stage into account, a good CV with no obvious weaknesses (e.g. awards received for work or training, previous employment history, conference papers, publications).	
6	An adequate proposal in quality of work programme, impact and outputs, achievable and realistic objectives and/or fit with applicant's career aspirations.	An adequate candidate with the achievement or expectation of a PhD meeting ESRC eligibility requirements for the PDF scheme. Taking career stage into account, an adequate overall CV (e.g. awards received for work or training, previous employment history, conference papers, publications).	
5	An adequate proposal that nevertheless suffers from one minor but identifiable weakness in quality of work programme, impact and outputs, achievable and realistic objectives and/or fit with applicant's career aspirations.	A candidate with the achievement or expectation of a PhD meeting ESRC eligibility requirements for the PDF scheme. Taking career stage into account, an adequate CV but with one identifiable minor weakness (e.g. awards received for work or training, previous employment history, conference papers, publications).	Mentoring and research environment represent a near-perfect fit with the proposed work programme. Mentor has considered applicant's needs carefully and tailored a programme of support accordingly, clearly detailing how they will ensure the PDF is kept properly active and focussed throughout the fellowship and how they will keep PDF's long-term career prospects clearly in mind.

4	A proposal with a number of minor weaknesses in relation to quality of work programme, impact and outputs, achievable and realistic objectives and/or fit with applicant's career aspirations.	As (3) but taking career stage into account a CV that suffers from a number of minor weaknesses (e.g. awards received for work or training, previous employment history, conference papers, publications).	Mentoring and research environment represent a very good fit with the proposed work programme. Mentor has considered applicant's needs and programme of support appropriately, clearly acknowledging the need to ensure the PDF is kept properly active and focussed throughout the fellowship and keep the PDF's long-term career prospects clearly in mind.
3	A proposal with significant weaknesses in multiple elements of quality of work programme, impact and outputs, achievable and realistic objectives and/or fit with applicant's career aspirations.	A candidate with the achievement or expectation of a PhD meeting ESRC eligibility requirements for the PDF scheme. Taking career stage into account, a CV that suffers from one major weakness (e.g. awards received for work or training, previous employment history, conference papers, publications).	Mentoring and research environment represent a good fit with the proposed work programme. Mentor has given some consideration to the applicant's needs and necessary programme of support. Acknowledgement is given to how the PDF will be kept properly active and focussed throughout the fellowship and how the mentor will keep the PDF's long-term career prospects clearly in mind, but detail of this is less clear.
2	A weak proposal that would need considerable additional work before being fundable. Overall, the proposal is somewhat problematic, poorly-expressed, or shows a lack of knowledge in relation to the quality of work programme, impact and outputs, achievable and realistic objectives and/or fit with applicant's career.	A candidate with the achievement or expectation of a PhD meeting ESRC eligibility requirements for the PDF scheme. Taking career stage into account, a CV with more than one major weakness (e.g. awards received for work or training, previous employment history, conference papers, publications).	It is unclear that mentoring and research environment represent a good fit with the proposed work programme. Mentor has given little consideration to the applicant's needs and necessary programme of support. Little acknowledgement is given to how the PDF will be kept properly active and focussed throughout the fellowship nor to how the mentor will keep the PDF's long-term career prospects clearly in mind.

1	A very weak proposal that is not fundable. Overall, the proposal is highly problematic, poorly-expressed, or shows a lack of knowledge in relation to the quality of work programme, impact and outputs, achievable and realistic objectives and/or fit with applicant's career.	A candidate with the achievement or expectation of a PhD meeting ESRC eligibility requirements for the PDF scheme. Taking career stage into account, a CV with numerous major and minor weaknesses (e.g. awards received for work or training, previous employment history, conference papers, publications).	Mentoring and research environment do not represent a good fit with the proposed work programme. Mentor has given no consideration to the applicant's needs and necessary programme of support. No acknowledgement is given to how the PDF will be kept properly active and focussed throughout the fellowship nor to how the mentor will keep the PDF's long-term career prospects clearly in mind.