## How to Apply for MRBA Skills Bursary - Information and Process

Thank you for your interest in and application for a bursary for funding of the MRS Advanced Certificate.

As a needs-based organisation, MRBA has to ensure that the recipients of the Skills funding are suitable for benefiting from our help. Consequently, there is quite strict criteria in place to ensure that only those individuals who cannot afford the funding themselves, or whose employer does not have sufficient budget to fully fund the training, will receive MRBA Skills funding.

The next few pages outline the process, questions and next steps.

## Are you eligible?

Our bursary scheme is open to UK researchers who meet the following criteria:

You must be able to answer yes to this statement:

I have worked for at least 3 months continuously in the UK market or social research sector within the past 3 years

In addition, one of the statements below should describe your current employment status. If none of these describe your employment status then you are not eligible for MRBA Skills funding.

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| --- |
| I am currently an employee, fieldworker or intern in a UK market or social research agency/supplier which has an annual turnover of less than £2 million and my annual earnings are < £25,000 |
| I am currently an employee, fieldworker or intern of a UK client-side research team/buyer whose annual research & insight spend is less than £200,000 my annual earnings are < £25,000 |
| I am currently a UK freelance researcher or contractor with an annual income of less than £50,000 |
| I am currently an unemployed UK researcher seeking a new role in the UK market and social research sector |

## How much funding support might you receive?

In the application form you will be asked which MRS Advanced Certificate pathway you require funding support for. Therefore you need to decide this now. This [**link**](https://www.mrs.org.uk/learningCPD/advan_cert) takes you through to a handy guide from the MRS to help you make your choice.

The cost of each pathway, as at September 2018, is:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Pathway Options** | **Distance Learning** | **Face to Face** |
| Market Research Study Centre - Premium - fully tutored | £1,243.80 |   |
| Market Research Study Centre - Review Route | £793.80 |   |
| Research Academy | £1,776.00 | £2,214.00 |

Funding payments will be made to the appropriate learning provider, not to any individual applicant or their employer.

If you are planning to sit the MRS Advanced Certificate without following one of the accredited pathways above you will not qualify for MRBA funding.

MRBA Skills funding also works on a part matched funding basis, the amount of which depends upon your employment status at the time of your application.

On achievement of the MRS Advanced Certificate, MRBS Skills will reimburse the appropriate employer or individual the amount that person(s) has contributed.

The tables below explains this:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agency last annual turnover** ☞ | **< £250,000** | **£250,001 - £500,000** | **£500,001 - £2,000,000** |
| Currently an employee in a UK social or market research agency/supplier which has an annual turnover of less than £2 million  | 100% funding provided | 75% funding provided | 50% funding provided |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Research & Insight spend per annum** ☞ | **< £100,000** | **£100,001 - £150,000** | **£150,001 - £200,000** |
| Currently an employee of a UK client-side research team/buyer whose annual research & insight spend is less than £200,000 | 100% funding provided | 75% funding provided | 50% funding provided |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Currently a UK based freelance researcher, intern, contractor, fieldworker with an annual income of less than £50,000, or currently unemployed researcher | Expected to contribute £200 |  |  |

For example:

* Applicant A chooses to study at the Research Academy, face to face and works for an agency with an annual turnover between £250,001 - £500,000. Assuming the applicant meets all other funding criteria, MRBA Skills would contribute £1,660.50 (75% of £2,214). Applicant A would need to fund the remaining amount via their employer, or personally. Applicant A is successful is receiving MRBA Skills funding and passes the Advanced Certificate qualification. MRBA Skills reimburses the remainder of the fees paid by the employer or applicant personally.
* Applicant B chooses to study via the MRSC Premium fully tutored route and is currently a contractor. Assuming the applicant meets all other funding criteria, MRBA Skills would contribute £1,043.80. Applicant B would need to fund the remaining £200 personally. Applicant B is successful is receiving MRBA Skills funding but does not pass the Advanced Certificate qualification. MRBA Skills does not reimburse the remainder of the fees paid.

**Please note – MRBA Skills funding will be limited to one application per agency or company or organisation within each online application period.**

## The Process

The following are the steps for MRBA Skills funding:

1. You meet the above qualifying criteria.
2. You have chosen your Advanced Certificate pathway.
3. If appropriate, you have spoken with your employer who has confirmed any matched funding required.
4. You are now ready to apply – please make sure you have all required information (see next section) at the time of your application. Please note that you have to fill out the whole form and provide the information in one go. MRBA do not trace your application and so if you stop the application halfway through then you would need to start the application again.
5. You apply within the online application period as shown here:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Online Applications period** | **Online Applications reviewed** | **Decision outcome communicated to applicants** |
| Between 16th March - 18th October | 19th October - 16th November  | 17th - 23rd November |
| Between 19th October - 15th March  | 16th March - 5th April | 6th - 30th April |

1. You will be notified by email of the funding application decision, as per the decision outcome time period shown above.
2. If your funding application is successful, the MRBA will provide information on the next steps.
3. If your funding is unsuccessful, you may apply for one further funding round. However, the second application may not be made within a twelve month period of the date of the first application.

The Application & Information required

Below are the questions that you will asked in the application form. Please use this to prepare your answers and ensure you have the required documentation to upload at the time of your application.

**Please remember, once you start the application you need to complete it, it cannot be saved part way through.**

**If you wish to save all the information and documentation required into one PDF and upload this once, then that is fine.**

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You will also be asked to confirm that you have read the MRBA Skills and conditions so please read these on the following pages.

If, after reading this How to Apply document you still have questions, or wish to clarify any point, then please contact the MRBA by email at skills@mrba.org.uk

## MRBA Skills Terms & Conditions

**At the beginning of the application form, you will be asked if you have read these Terms and Conditions, so please do take a few minutes to read this section.**

* To be considered for MRBA Skills bursary, applicants must be eligible for all criteria as specified in this document, or referenced in the MRBA Skills webpage. If applicants do not meet the specified criteria they will be ineligible for MRBA Skills funding.
* MRBA Skills bursaries will be limited to a maximum of 10 per annum, irrespective of monetary value.
* Unsuccessful applications for funding received in one application period will not be carried forward or reviewed in the next application period unless a separate funding application is made.
* Bursaries cannot be applied retrospectively for qualification courses that have already been undertaken or are in progress.
* Applicants may submit one further application for the same MRBA Skills bursary if an initial application is unsuccessful. However, the second application may not be made within a twelve-month period of the date of their first application.
* All bursaries are paid to the chosen learning provider as indicated by the applicant at the time of application.
* MRBA Skills is only responsible for ensuring the Skills funding is paid to the chosen learning provider, not any matched or other funding paid by an employer or individual applicant.
* On achievement of the qualification (in accordance with the criteria set and within the timeframes specified) MRBA Skills will reimburse the appropriate person or employer dependent upon how the original funding was allocated.
* Bursaries are not normally paid back, as they are a grant not a loan. However, if an applicant withdraws from the study course/qualification, reimbursement will only be considered for Freelancers, Self-employed, Unemployed and Intern applicants who do not also have employer funding support. Any request for a reimbursement must be supported by compelling evidence and will be limited to £100 per applicant. Each request for a reimbursement will be considered on an individual basis. Requests for reimbursement should be made in writing to skills@mrba.org.uk, clearly marked ‘Reimbursement’.
* Further funding will be considered for any qualification resits should any applicant receiving MRBA Skills funding fail the qualification on their first attempt. Any resit must be taken within 12 months of the original date of application for MRBA Skills funding. Resit funding will be considered on a case by case basis. Requests for resit funding should be made in writing to skills@mrba.org.uk, clearly marked Resit.
* Successful MRBA Skills funding applicants will be expected to provide feedback on their progress during and after the course, as well as some months after the qualification has been achieved to measure the impact of the professional development on their career progression. This feedback may take the form of follow up surveys or email communications. In some cases, applicants may be asked for their view to be included in future marketing materials.
* All files uploaded and all data provided in support of a MRBA Skills funding application will be kept securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Once each application has been assessed and the outcome communicated to each applicant, all uploaded files will be deleted. The data provided in each application form (whether partial or completed) will be retained for 3 years.
* Funding decisions are final and the MRBA will not engage in correspondence about any application.
* By agreeing to these terms and conditions and completing the online application form, the applicant acknowledges that, if they receive MRBA Skills funding and subsequent to receipt it is discovered they have misrepresented any aspect of their application, they will repay the full amount of funding received to the MRBA.