



## 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.

If you haven't already registered your interest with MRBA Skills then please do so **NOW** by emailing [mrba\\_skills@mrba.org.uk](mailto:mrba_skills@mrba.org.uk). Someone will be in contact with you about the MRBA Skills bursary to answer any questions you may have and explain the application process in more detail before you actually apply.

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:

By the time I start studying for the MRS Advanced Certificate I will 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.

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 < £35,000

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 < £35,000

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 learning provider you require funding support for. Therefore you need to decide this now. This [link](#) takes you through to a handy guide from the MRS to help you make your choice.

The cost of each chosen learning provider (excl. VAT), as of February 2024, is:

Learning Provider	
Market Research Study Centre: Review Route	£1044.00
Market Research Study Centre: Premium - fully tutored	£1554.00
London Marketing Set: Face- to-Face course - fully tutored	£2160.00
Research Academy: Online course with live tutorials - fully tutored	£2130.00


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 learning providers 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, MRBA Skills will reimburse the appropriate employer or individual the amount that person(s) has contributed.

The tables below explain 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 Provider X 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 75% of the course fee. Applicant A would need to fund the remaining amount via their employer, or personally. Applicant A is successful in 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 Provider Y and is currently a contractor. Assuming the applicant meets all other funding criteria, MRBA Skills would contribute the full course fee, minus £200 which would be paid for by applicant B. Applicant B is successful in 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 Learning Provider.
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 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 15 <sup>th</sup> March - 17 <sup>th</sup> October	18 <sup>th</sup> October - 14 <sup>th</sup> November	15 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> November
Between 18 <sup>th</sup> October - 14 <sup>th</sup> March	15 <sup>th</sup> March – 31 <sup>st</sup> March	1 <sup>st</sup> - 15 <sup>th</sup> April

6. You will be notified by email of the funding application decision, as per the decision outcome time period shown above.
7. If your funding application is successful, the MRBA will provide information on the next steps.
8. 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 be 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. The application 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.**

QUESTION DETAIL	DOCUMENTATION TO UPLOAD (as PDF)
Applicant Contact Details	
Confirmation of the Learning provider you have chosen:  Market Research Study Centre: Review Route Market Research Study Centre: Premium - fully tutored London Marketing Set: Face-to-Face - fully tutored Research Academy: Online course with live tutorials - fully tutored Research Academy: Face-to-Face course with online access - fully tutored	
How did you hear about the MRBA funding initiative?	
Please provide evidence of your right to work in the UK: copy of passport or visa etc.	Upload this as a scanned file
Which statement best describes your route for funding:	
1. Via employer which is a MR supplier/agency	Upload evidence of organisation annual turnover i.e. MD/Director written confirmation
2. Via employer which is a MR buyer/client	Upload evidence of annual research & insight budget i.e. Director/Head of Department written confirmation
3. As an individual who is a MR Freelancer /Contractor	Upload evidence of annual earnings < £50,000 i.e. latest P60 or SA302 form or signed confirmation from your financial provider
4. Currently unemployed but with previous MR role	Written confirmation of employment length, role and annual salary from previous employer
5. Current/previous intern in MR role	Upload evidence of annual turnover/research & insight budget as relevant plus confirmation of employment length and role from previous employer if currently unemployed

QUESTION DETAIL	DOCUMENTATION TO UPLOAD (as PDF)
How many years/months worked in Social & Market Research in total	
Confirmation have worked 3 months continuously in past 3 years	
Level of final education	
Current (or if unemployed) previous employment details - including employment dates, previous role, annual salary before tax and CV	Upload CV
Circumstances prompting MRBA Skills Funding application	
<p>Main reason for applying</p> <p>Agency/Client employer cannot afford to pay/does not have sufficient budget/to pay the full fees/costs</p> <p>Agency/Client employer has cash flow problems and cannot pay the full sum upfront</p> <p>Agency/Client employer is not supportive of in-work study time (so applicant applying as an individual)</p> <p>Applicant has only worked as an intern or worker (i.e. not an employee) and does not have access to employer/organisational support or funding</p> <p>Applicant is unemployed researcher seeking new opportunity and qualification/studying would assist their suitability for roles</p>	
Whether you are receiving other funding for training and skills development and details of this funding	
Provide a personal statement to explain how you think the MRS Advanced Certificate will enhance your market or social research career	Upload personal statement
Whether previously applied for MRBS Skills funding	
<b>If currently employed</b> - you will need to provide an employer reference stating your experience, salary before tax, knowledge and suitability to study for and pass the MRS Advanced Certificate and confirmation of providing you the environment and time to to study	Upload employer reference, confirmation of all details and endorsement
<b>If currently unemployed</b> - provide a reference from your most recent employer confirming employment dates, reasons for leaving, salary and job role, and endorsement of your knowledge and suitability to study and pass the MRS Advanced Certificate	Upload previous employer reference, confirmation of all details and endorsement
If your previous employer is unable to provide a reference/details as required above please explain why	
Applicants declaration of commitment to taking the course and sitting the exam/assignment within 12 months of funding being made available, if application successful	



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](mailto: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 **20** 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. Any matched funding to be paid by an employer or individual applicant is the individual applicant's responsibility to arrange and must be paid by directly to the Learning Provider, not MRBA Skills
- 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.
- If an applicant withdraws from the study course/qualification for whatever reason, MRBA Skills will not receive any refund from the applicants chosen learning provider. Therefore. MRBA Skills will seek reimbursement from the applicant for the following amounts:
  - o Within 3 months of the bursary being granted – 100% reimbursement
  - o Between 3 – 6 months of the bursary being granted – 50% reimbursement
  - o Over 6 months from when the bursary is granted – no reimbursement sought
- 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 views 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.