

## Student Applicants to the NBCDTP Collaborative Doctoral Award (Staff-led) Competition

In assessing the suitability of the student applicant for an NBCDTP Collaborative Doctoral Award, assessors should consider the following:

- Do the applicant's skills and qualifications or work experience (particularly for applicants with non-standard academic trajectories) demonstrate their outstanding potential and preparedness for the proposed doctoral research?
- Do referees (if references have been provided at this stage), focus on the particular abilities of the applicant that make them suitable for postgraduate research, and do they support the applicant unreservedly? Do referees describe any special circumstances or contextual factors of the applicant that should be taken into account? A weak reference is one that indicates significant problems, omits to address key issues, or offers 'stock' or general replies with little detail, for example, on previous marks.

Grade	Descriptor
13-16	An <i>outstanding</i> applicant: Full evidence is provided of outstanding past academic, practice or professional achievement, signalling extremely strong potential and outstanding preparedness for doctoral study. To be funded as a matter of utmost priority.
11-12	An <i>excellent</i> applicant: Excellence is fully evidenced in terms of academic, practice or professional achievement, signalling strong potential, and a very high level of preparedness for doctoral study. To be funded as a matter of priority, though does not merit the highest priority rating.
9-10	A <i>strong</i> applicant: Solid evidence of very good past academic, practice or professional performance and potential, and a high level of preparedness for doctoral study. Deserving of consideration for funding.
5-8	A <i>good</i> applicant: Evidence of good past academic, practice or professional achievement and potential is provided, and the candidate is reasonably well prepared for doctoral study. But in the highly competitive context of the NBCDTP competition, it is not possible to be considered for funding.
3-4	An applicant with some strengths but about whom there are reservations concerning past academic, practice or professional achievements, potential for original independent research, or preparedness for doctoral study. Not recommended for funding.
1-2	An applicant who falls significantly short of the expected standards in one or more areas. Not suitable for funding.