Dear Andrew

RE: Doctoral training accounts

Several heads of physics departments have contacted the Institute to express concern about a reduction in doctoral training account (DTAs) funds, and hence the number of PhD studentships, that their departments have received this year. This concern is coupled with the fear that EPSRC is planning to phase out DTAs in favour of doctoral training centres (DTCs), which will lead to a loss of flexibility for departments to place their students strategically, particularly to support emerging areas.

DTAs allow departments to kick-start research programmes for young academics, provide additional support for long-term projects, and enable research areas experiencing short-term funding gaps to continue to function. Whilst DTCs are a good idea, they should not be introduced at the expense of DTAs.

I would be grateful if you could confirm EPSRC's current policy on the future of DTAs and, if there is an intention to shift the focus of funding, urge you to instigate an open and informed dialogue about this issue with the physics community.

Yours sincerely

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