

Department Name:

UCL

Supervisors names and email addresses:

- 1) Professor Peter Fonagy (p.fonagy@ucl.ac.uk)
- 2) Dr Rob Saunders (r.saunders@ucl.ac.uk)
- 3) Professor Stephen Pilling (s.pilling@ucl.ac.uk)

Funding Status:

Directly Funded Project (UK and EU Students Only)

Stipend: £17,803

Application Deadline: 26 January 2020

Interview date: 12 February 2020

Duration:

3 years, full time

Project Description:

There has been a fivefold increase in the number of students declaring a mental health difficulty to their institution over the last decade, leaving student services struggling to meet demand. Universities UK, the Office for Students and the national student mental health charity Student Minds have acknowledged that the needs of students will only be met through better partnership working with the NHS. However, estimates from London Clinical Commissioning Groups are that locally up to 40% of students entering mental health care do so in crisis, suggesting current care pathways are not functioning well for this population. There is universal concern about the increasing prevalence of suicide and self-harm in this demographic group.

The London context presents particular challenges for delivering effective care. Students may live anywhere in London or commute in; and may be registered with a GP near their family home or university, making them eligible for primary and secondary mental health care in different areas. London universities are also some of the most diverse, with proportionately higher numbers of international students and students from black and minority ethnic

groups. Healthcare inequalities for people from ethnic minority and low socioeconomic status groups are well known. It is likely that problems accessing appropriate evidence based mental health care are not borne equally across the student population in London, but this question has not yet been investigated.

The studentship holder would investigate access to mental health care for different groups of students in London. They would collect routine data from participating NHS mental health services and GP practices, and analyse patterns of inequality of access using appropriate statistical methods. They would be a member of a team working to create evidence based care pathways to optimise the use of available resources to meet the mental health needs of the student community.

Project-specific skills and experience required:

The ability to manage large datasets; experience of advanced quantitative methods; organisational skills; interest in mental health.

All candidates should hold a Master's qualification (or complete their Master's by September 2020) in an appropriate discipline and have a minimum of a 2:1 or equivalent in their first degree. Applicants should preferably have knowledge of the UK health and care system. All applicants are required to have excellent written and verbal communication skills. They should also be willing to work collaboratively in multi-disciplinary and multi-professional teams.

Enquiries email names and addresses:

Prof Peter Fonagy: p.fonagy@ucl.ac.uk

Training opportunities

PhD students will be entitled to the full range of PhD training opportunities at their host institution. In addition, all PhD students will benefit from the training provided by the NIHR ARC North Thames Academy (The Academy). The Academy brings together PhD students from across ARC North Thames, to create a community of students training in applied health research. The Academy works alongside each host institution's graduate training programme to equip students with the skills needed to work at the interface of academia and health

services.

Our doctoral programme focuses on practical aspects of applied health research, such as the skills required to undertake research in health care and public health settings, to engage patients and the public in research, and to navigate relevant ethical and research governance approval systems. In addition, we aim to provide students with an understanding of how their work fits into current NHS structures and applied public health research environments. PhD students will be expected to attend and present at scientific meetings aimed at disseminating the findings of ARC research.

Publication and wider dissemination:

It is expected that results of the PhD research will be publishable in good quality, peer-reviewed academic journals and communicated at conferences. The research would also be expected to generate outputs tailored to applied health research, public health practitioner, and policy-making audiences.

Eligibility

Candidates should hold a Master's qualification in a relevant discipline (or complete their Master's by September 2020) and have a minimum of a 2:1 or equivalent in their first degree. Applicants should preferably have knowledge of the UK health and care system. All applicants require excellent written and verbal communication skills and should be willing to work collaboratively in multi-disciplinary and multi-professional teams.

Due to funding restrictions, applicants must be UK/EU nationals. Please refer to [UK Council for International Student Affairs](#) (UKCISA) for the criteria.

How to apply

If you have queries about potential projects or would like to discuss these in more detail, please contact the appropriate supervisors by email. In case of any difficulties in making contact, please email ARC.academy@ucl.ac.uk

Your application should consist of:

- A CV (to include qualifications, work experience, publications, presentations and prizes) plus contact details of two academic referees (references will be taken up for all shortlisted candidates).

- A personal statement (300 words) describing your suitability for the proposed project including how your research experience, skills and interests relate to the topic.
- A 1-page proposal of how you would develop the PhD project that you are applying for.

Please send your application to ARC.academy@ucl.ac.uk