

Summary

Job title	NIHR Undergraduate Internship Programme
Division	Medical Sciences
Department	Psychiatry
Location	Department of Psychiatry, Warneford Hospital
Grade and salary	£2400 stipend plus £1000 in travel and accommodation costs (<i>pro rata</i> for internships <8 weeks)
Hours	Full-time (37.5 hours per week)
Contract type	6-8 weeks
Reporting to	Dr Patrick Pflanz/Professor John Gallacher

The role

The [Undergraduate Internship Programme \(UIP\)](#) is a new scheme designed by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to encourage undergraduate students in the 2nd or 3rd year of degree-level study to consider a career in health and social care research, focusing on priority and under-represented professions and disciplines including public health and research methodology (see 'Selection Criteria').

The scheme, which is funded by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), will allow interns to gain hands-on experience through a 6- to 8-week placement in the area or discipline they are interested in pursuing, supported throughout by dedicated supervision and mentorship from experts in the field. This opportunity will suit undergraduate students who are considering pursuing a research career after their studies.

This is a **fully funded internship**. Interns will receive a £2,400 stipend plus £1,000 to support travel and accommodation costs (pro-rated for internships <8 weeks). Interns will also have access to a small training and development fund (£200) to attend courses/training/conferences that will complement their internship experience.

The Dementias Platform UK Team are advertising an internship, detailed below.

This intern will work under supervision to provide research support for a literature review on the role of hearing loss in dementia and cognitive decline. Previous research showed that hearing impairment is associated with an increased risk of MCI and an accelerated rate of cognitive decline (e.g. Bucholc, Bauermeister et al. 2022). The mechanism through which hearing impairment impacts cognition remains under-researched. The overall objective of this project will be to investigate mediating variables of the effect of hearing impairment on cognition in cohort data. The intern will review literature on shared risk factors for hearing impairment and cognitive decline and candidate mediators for the association between hearing impairment and cognitive decline. Findings from the literature review will be used to generate hypothesis-driven research questions that will then be tested in cohort data available through the Dementias Platform UK data portal.

By the end of the internship, the intern should be able to:

1. conduct a systematic review, including searching relevant literature in databases,
2. select relevant papers according to inclusion criteria and extract information,
3. acquire knowledge about hearing loss and cognitive decline, which is a topic of high societal relevance to an ageing population,
4. summarise findings from the literature review in the form of a report and a presentation,
5. gain insight into the overall scientific process, including how to use existing literature to generate research hypotheses,
6. summarise findings for a non-scientific audience,
7. present findings to an academic audience (e.g. a research group meeting),

The intern will also develop their knowledge in the following areas: dementia research, epidemiology, systematic reviews, and interdisciplinary neuroscience.

All interns will have individual and joint (i.e. with the other interns) supervision throughout the duration of this internship to support them with their project and wider career development.

Responsibilities

- Identify relevant literature using a predefined literature search algorithm.
- Undertake a comprehensive and systematic literature review under supervision and guidance provided by the supervisor and DPUK director, and write up the results for publication in a peer-reviewed journal or for presentation at a conference or public meeting.
- Summarize key findings from peer-reviewed publications and extract relevant meta-data and statistical outcome metrics within guidelines provided by the supervisor.
- Carry out work that contributes towards a scientific publication.
- Gather, analyse and present secondary quantitative research data from various sources.

Selection criteria

Per the NIHR scheme guidelines, applicants must:

- be in their second or third year of enrolment in degree-level study of one of the theme's disciplines of focus (health care professionals, social care, research methodology, public health, data science) or a related field (e.g. psychology) at a **UK-based higher education institution**, and
- be willing and committed to explore a career in health and social care research.

In addition, applicants to the internship should have:

Essential

- A strong interest in neurosciences, epidemiology, and biomedical research.
- Possess sufficient specialist knowledge in medical and statistical terminology to read peer-reviewed scientific publications.
- Experience using Rayyan, a web-based application designed to assist researchers in conducting systematic reviews, or willingness to learn how to use Rayyan in a short time frame
- Excellent communication skills, including writing text that can be published and representing the research network at meetings.
- Effective communication skills in diverse and multicultural research environments.
- Demonstrable understanding of and commitment to research values, including research integrity, research ethics, and transparency, as outlined in the British Psychological Society's code of ethics.
- Experience following and adapting literature research protocols, search algorithms, and strategies.
- Demonstrable understanding of and commitment to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Desirable

- Experience using Endnote, Mendeley, Zotero or another software package to manage bibliographic references.
- Experience using scientific search engines, e.g. OVID, SCOPUS, PubMed, Google Scholar.

How to apply

For an informal discussion or to find out more about this internship, please contact Dr Patrick Pflanz (patrick.pflanz@psych.ox.ac.uk) and Professor John Gallacher john.gallacher@psych.ox.ac.uk

If you wish to apply for this internship, please send the following to Niall Summers, EA/Research Administrator to Professor Gallacher niall.summers@psych.ox.ac.uk by **9.00 am on 3rd July**:

- A covering letter of *no more than 500 words* describing why you would like to be considered for the internship and how you meet the criteria
- Your CV/resumé
- The name and contact details of two referees who know you in an academic or professional capacity

We will hold online interviews in the afternoons of the **10th, 11th, and 12th of July**. We will send you the interview questions in advance to help you know what to expect and to be more confident during the interview. We aim to welcome interns to the Department from **late July to early August** (but we are flexible on the exact start date).

We particularly wish to encourage students from underrepresented backgrounds or who have lived experience of mental health difficulties to apply for these internship.

N.B. The offer of an internship will be subject to references and confirmation of right to work in the UK (a list of acceptable documents can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checklist>).