

NIHR Studentship Information and Guidance

Clinical Academic Training Pathway for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals

Master's Degree Places in Clinical Research

Faculty of Health Sciences University of Southampton

Information and Guidance for Studentship Applicants

Background

Clinical Academic Training Pathway

In 2009, the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) for England launched a major new initiative to boost clinical academic training for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals. As part of this initiative, the Faculty of Health Sciences successfully secured funding for 10 fully funded places per year on our MRes Clinical Research programme, between 2009 and 2011. We were awarded a further 15 fully funded places per year with the last round of studentships starting in September 2014. We can confirm that we have 10 places to allocate for September 2015.

The UKCRC Sub-committee for Nurses in Clinical Research published its Report 'Developing the best research professionals. Qualified graduate nurses: recommendations for preparing and supporting clinical academic nurses of the future' in August 2007. The Report makes a number of recommendations which includes four levels of award to support graduate nurses, midwives and allied health professionals who have experience in a clinical setting to develop their research skills and academic careers. The NIHR Clinical Academic Training Pathway four levels of Award are: Master's, Doctorate, Clinical Lectureship and Senior Academic Clinical Lectureship. The Pathway will:-

- Support nurses, midwives, allied health professionals and healthcare scientists committed to developing a career involving research;
- Support a comprehensive career structure;
- Be fully integrated with clinical practice and or (post-graduate) training;
- Support research training from early to advanced levels;
- Have flexible entry and exit points;
- Be trainee-centered; and
- Focus on research within the remit of the NIHR.

The Master's in Research represents the earliest element of the Integrated Clinical Academic Training Pathway. It is the first phase of training suitable for graduate nurses, midwives and allied health professionals who have at least 1 years' experience of clinical practice since graduating but who have little formal research experience or training. The training is available 1 year full-time or 2 years part-time.

We recommend that you visit the NIHR Trainees Coordinating Centre website (<http://www.nihr.ac.uk/funding/training-programmes.htm?from>) for further information on the Clinical Academic Careers pathway and the list of eligible professions.

The Faculty of Health Sciences

The Faculty of Health Sciences is a nationally and internationally recognized centre of excellence for nursing, midwifery and allied health professional (AHP) research and education. The Faculty offers a range of established clinically-focused Masters and PhD level programmes and a range of postgraduate inter-professional learning opportunities for health care professionals.

A well-developed framework for preparing nurses, midwives, AHPs and healthcare scientists for research careers is in place, including a multi-professional PhD programme, Doctorate of Clinical Practice, and a post-doctoral career development programme. The Faculty has successfully established funded clinical academic careers posts for nurses, midwives and AHPs at doctorate and post-doctoral levels, working with partner Trusts and HEE.

The Faculty's Research Groups are focused on Rehabilitation & Health Technology, Cancer, Palliative and End of Life Care, and Innovative & Essential Care. Successful applicants will be supported to work within one of these Research Groups, with an experienced research supervisor. Further information on the research groups can be found on our website: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/healthsciences/research/groups.page>

The MRes Clinical & Health Research

The overall aim of the course is to prepare nurses, midwives, AHPs and healthcare scientists with the requisite knowledge and skills to effectively undertake, manage and deliver all aspects of the clinical research process, making an effective contribution to the generation & application of patient-focused, applied research in the clinical context. The course requires students to draw on clinical practice to inform their learning throughout the programme.

The MRes combines training in research methods (both qualitative and quantitative) with training in research management and governance, and equips its graduates with the skills to manage and deliver research in a clinical setting. The course is aimed at preparing graduates for either future research at PhD level or clinical research practice.

The programme is targeted at nurses, midwives, AHPs and healthcare scientists, including research-active staff based in clinical research facilities, clinical trials units and other academic/research units, and graduates seeking preparation for a clinical research career. We envisage that graduates from the MRes will engage in clinical research in a variety of employment settings and will be able to take up key roles in research teams to manage and deliver research in clinical settings and/or will be well prepared for future development as clinical research leaders.

Modular structure of the course

The course consists of taught modules leading to 60 ECTS credits and a dissertation (30 ECTS). Students undertake an introductory research methods training module, and modules in both quantitative and qualitative research methods. They also take a module focused on the relationship between research and clinical practice and their future role in generating and implementing clinically-relevant research. Students will also complete an open research skills development module linked to a Research Group within the Faculty of Health Sciences. The clinical research project component of the course extends over the period of registration. Students will also select an option module from the range of clinical, research and leadership modules provided within the Faculty (see our website for further details of level 7 modules available: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/healthsciences/cpd/courses.page3>)

Modules are as follows:

1. Designing, Implementing & Communicating Research L7 (10 ECTS)
2. Clinical Research in Practice (10 ECTS)
3. Applied Quantitative Research Methods (10 ECTS)
4. Applied Qualitative Research Methods (10 ECTS)
5. Developing Research Skills (10 ECTS)
6. Research dissertation (30 ECTS)
7. Option module (10 ECTS)

The NIHR funded studentships

The Faculty of Health Sciences has been awarded 10 NIHR funded studentships for the 2015-16 academic year.

The studentships provide funding to cover salary backfill and course fees.

Places are available part-time (104 weeks maximum) or full-time (52 weeks) and successful applicants will combine a role in clinical practice with study on the MRes. It should be noted that, due to research ethics and governance procedures, the scope to carry out research projects in the clinical area may be more limited for full-time students. It will also, necessarily, be more difficult to maintain links with clinical practice during the course. Prospective applicants should therefore weigh the benefits of full-time study against any possible disadvantages for integration of the clinical and research roles.

NIHR-funded MRes students will be required to attend the University at least two days per week during the period of study.

Application process

For entry in September 2015, please apply via the University of Southampton on-line application system. Please insert 'NIHR studentship' in the box for funding on this form.

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Normally a 2:1 degree or above
- Registration with the NMC or HPC or other relevant professional body
- At least 1 years' experience of clinical practice since graduating
- Employed by an organisation delivering health care for the NHS or providing services to the NHS
- Able to be registered as a 'home' student for fees purposes

Additionally:

- Able to demonstrate clinical experience and expertise in their field of practice and is supported to undertake the MRes by their clinical line manager or appropriate person in their employing organisation
- Demonstrate relevant research interest, experience and/or a commitment to developing clinical research in practice
- Able to demonstrate support for their progression in a clinical academic career from the clinical environment in which they work
- Demonstrate a clinical academic career plan
- The potential of the candidate to make a contribution to clinical research development and capacity in their chosen field in the UK

You should consider the above criteria in your supporting statement.

Studentships will be offered on a secondment basis, and applicants must demonstrate support for their application from their clinical manager/employing organisation. Applicants must

therefore discuss their application with their relevant manager or employing organisation, including support from a clinical mentor for the duration of the studentship.

For further information please email pgapply.fhs@southampton.ac.uk quoting 'MRes Clinical Research studentships'.

For enquiries about the MRes Clinical Research studentships, please contact Dr Cathy Bowen, Deputy Programme leader on C.J.Bowen@southampton.ac.uk

Closing date for applications has been extended to **Friday 24 July 2015**

Please note – if you have already applied your application will be considered after the revised closing date

Programme structure and content is subject to change through periodic review and quality assurance processes.

