



UCD School of Psychology

Newman Building
University College Dublin
Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland

T: +353 1 7168408
F: +353 1 7161181

Scoil na Siceolaíochta UCD

Áras Newman
An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath
Belfield, Baile Átha Cliath 4, Éire

www.ucd.ie/psychology

UCD School of Psychology - PhD Scholarship 2022

The UCD School of Psychology in conjunction with the Irish Cancer Society & St Vincent's University Hospital are delighted to announce a three year PhD Scholarship (commencing 2022). This scholarship is attached to an innovative clinical research project at the High Risk Genetics Clinic at St Vincent's University Hospital.

Project: *Understanding the needs and piloting a psychological service to patients with genetic and high familial cancer risk*

Primary Supervisor: Dr Paul D'Alton

The Project: At St Vincent's University Hospital (SVUH) a high risk breast clinic was instigated in the past decade. To date there have been 6800 patients registered on the clinic database with a weekly clinic facilitated by a Consultant Breast Surgeon and an Advanced Nurse Practitioner. Just over 100 of these patients have a confirmed diagnosis of BRCA1/2 with access to genetic testing a significant issue. The remaining patients, with a recognized high cancer risk, and often requiring support and intervention across a spectrum of mental health and lifestyle related needs, have no access to multi-disciplinary input. This picture is mirrored in designated cancer centres across the country.

This limited service provision means that the majority of registered patients attending high risk clinics have had no access to psychological services. Furthermore, having not had a cancer diagnosis themselves or confirmed genetic risk this cohort are also limited in their ability to access community based supports. As such the psycho-social needs of this population are poorly understood and not assessed in any coherent or meaningful way.

The project aims to understand the psycho-social needs of patients with a genetic or high familial risk of breast cancer and to pilot a clinical psychology service for this population. The PhD researcher associated with the project will work alongside the newly appointed senior clinical psychologist and the wider research team to develop and roll out a nationwide psycho-social needs assessment of the patient population. The senior clinical psychologist will translate the findings from this assessment, along with best practice guidelines, into a programme of clinical psychology services for patients attending the high risk breast clinic at SVUH. Working with the breast care nurses, surgeons and others involved in the medical management of this population currently the clinical psychology service will be embedded within the existing structure of the high risk breast clinic. This will go towards meeting the unmet needs of this population locally in SVUH and will also contribute to our national evidence base in terms of the unmet needs of the broader high-risk / genetic patient population.

The project will see a PhD researcher to undertake the research and evaluation arms under the supervision the PI and a full-time senior clinical psychologist. The PhD student, in conjunction with the senior psychologist and wider project team will (1) profile the psycho-social needs of patients with a genetic or high familial risk of cancer nationally (2) pilot and evaluate a psychology service within the high risk breast clinic at SVUH according to the findings and international best practice. In addition the psycho-social needs of this cohort nationally will be identified and a pathway for meeting these needs outlined and evaluated.

Enquiries to: paul.dalton@ucd.ie

It is essential that candidates familiarise themselves with the UCD School of Psychology PhD Programme guide and eligibility criteria:

<https://www.ucd.ie/psychology/research/researchdegreesandresearchers/phdresearchprogramme/>

Essential Criteria

- BA/BSc honours level degree in psychology from an accredited course (minimum 2.1 award) or level 9 conversion.
- MA/MSc in Psychology or related area
- Experience in data analysis (e.g. excel, SPSS, R)
- Experience with health / clinical psychology research.
- Excellent English writing skills
- Strong interpersonal qualities
- Clear interest in clinical / health psychology

Desirable Criteria

- Experience with cancer care research / hospital research
- Research assistant experience

How to apply- Necessary documents and important dates

The awarding of the funding is dependent on the successful applicant being accepted for a PhD by UCD School of Psychology.

Please download the Enquiry form [here](#) and submit it along with a Curriculum Vitae and academic transcripts as one Pdf file by **DATE Friday 4th March 2022 at 5pm**

Candidates are asked to follow the steps below.

1. Once downloaded complete the Enquiry form making reference to the PhD Scholarship with Dr Paul D'Alton.

2. Upload the Enquiry Form with your CV, and academic transcripts **as a single file** (pdf.) through the portal [here](#).

Interviews to be held **late March 2022**.

PhD Studentship Terms and Conditions

1. The overall aim of the scholarship is to attract applicants of the highest academic standards to participate in the UCD School of Psychology PhD programme which will provide them with the training, experience and mentorship necessary to their professional development.
2. The scholarship will pay an annual tax-free stipend of £10,000 each year for three years.
3. EU and non-EU students are equally eligible for studentships under this award.
4. All students are liable for the Student Centre Levy. Fee varies, for indicative purposes 2020-2021 levy was €254.
5. Scholarships are open to any new PhD students to the PhD in Psychology
6. Scholarships will typically be awarded for up to three years, with annual reviews of progress. Continuation of the scholarship is contingent on satisfactory progress, to be determined by the Research Studies Panel (RSP) and the Graduate Programme assessment process. The scholarship will terminate on any student's withdrawal from their programme.
7. Students accepted under this scheme must meet the UCD School of Psychology Graduate research Programme university standard entry requirements.
8. The award is made on the basis of full-time engagement by the PhD student. Students should not take on other duties or work that will negatively impact their ability to commit to their research programme, other than demonstratorships or teaching assistantships activities or other activities which form part of their professional development as directed by their research supervisor.
9. It is not permissible to hold this studentship alongside an external award for the same student. However, if a student applies for and secures an equivalent individual award, this studentship can be replaced by a top-up stipend and a top-up (if necessary) to the appropriate level of consumables costs.
10. By the end of the first year of the award, the PhD student must have completed research integrity training. The PhD student should also complete appropriate transferrable skills modules and record these in their RPDP (e.g. research skills and academic writing).
11. All PhD Scholarship students are welcomed as part of the UCD School of Psychology research community and, as such, are expected to participate fully in the scholarly life of the School, inclusive of research seminars, conferences and other scholarly events.
12. Applications will be accepted from suitably qualified applicants regardless of nationality or residence. Applicants, however, must make their own visa/consular arrangements to ensure that they are eligible to reside in Ireland for the duration of their studies. Applicants are **STRONGLY** advised to make any visa application as early as possible as this process may be time consuming and failure to obtain a visa in time for the commencement of the academic year will likely necessitate cancellation of the scholarship award.
13. The PI along with the School Graduate Research Committee will construct an appropriate selection board and make its recommendations on selection to the Head of School.
14. Applications will be evaluated and ranked by a Selection Board according to the following criteria:

- o Transcripts and other evidence of academic skills (publications, research assistance, etc);
- o Quality (clarity, feasibility, academic relevance, innovation) of the application;
- o Personal motivation;
- o Fit with the research strengths of the school and prospective supervisor.

15. Scholarships will be awarded only to those who will be full-time students and who will engage full-time in research during the period of the scholarship.

16. It is the responsibility of the Scholarship holder to inform the University of any change to the circumstances on which the award of the Scholarship was based. The Scholar must also take responsibility for updating their personal records including any change of address, telephone, or e-mail on the UCD Student Web system within two weeks of such a change.

17. Once scholarship awards are issued, students must indicate acceptance in writing within two weeks of the notification being distributed by the committee. It is the student's responsibility to formally accept the scholarship offer – a non-response will be considered as declining the offer. Offers will be conditional on verification of original transcripts.

18. Successful applicants must be present at UCD by the start of the semester in which they start their programme.

19. Should a scholar be unable for any reason (including medical reasons) to pursue his/her studies in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Scholarship, he/she must inform the School (via his/her supervisor and the PhD Director) within two weeks of such a situation coming to his/her attention. However, given the basis on which scholarships are awarded, UCD reserves the right to withdraw, suspend, reallocate or seek reimbursement of all or part of the scholarship.

20. These Scholarships are held subject to these Terms and Conditions. If any of the above are breached by a Scholarship holder, UCD School of Psychology reserves the right to suspend or terminate the Scholarship and/or will require the Scholar to reimburse UCD School of Psychology for such payments as have already been made.

21. Successful applicants may be required to sign a form of consent under the Data Protection Act 1998 in relation to data records concerning their registration status and academic record as well as the handling of student and other data.

22. Scholarship holders must be available to assist in the promotion of graduate studies at UCD recruitment events and within associated activities at School, College and University levels.

23. All publicity, including public lectures, publications, print materials and press releases, television and radio advertisements, websites, film, video and audio recordings associated with or arising from the research undertaken by a Scholar while in receipt of a Scholarship must contain acknowledgment of funding received from the Irish Cancer Society. .

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

UCD believes in equality, diversity and inclusion and embeds these fairness principles into all aspects of University life. UCD's vision for EDI is to be a leader and role model in equality and diversity in the higher education sector nationally and internationally, and for EDI to be at the heart of all we do. Learn more about how we do this in our [policy on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion](#).