

Clinical Doctoral Research Fellowships Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

The programme is a four-year, full-time doctoral programme of study that incorporates clinical work. Clinical Doctoral Research Fellows are **usually** NHS band 5 post holders within a clinical service area and registered as full-time students with the Faculty of Health Sciences. Fellows receive their tuition fees plus an annual stipend (not less than £14,000) and a small budget for consumables. The stipend includes a small incremental increase year on year after year one. The programme consists of two interrelated components:

Clinical practice The clinical practice placement will require Fellows to undertake the role described in the Agenda for Change (AFC) Band 5 job description appropriate for the clinical service area and professional registration. Fellows will hold an honorary contract with the NHS organisation and undertake 40% of their time in the allocated clinical service area. NHS organisation induction, relevant training and a period of preceptorship will be completed as required. The Fellows will be clinically supervised to facilitate learning and practice within the clinical environment. Fellows may be required to work flexible shift patterns and travel according to clinical service area needs.

Research

The research component of the programme will enable Fellows to undertake their research that addresses everyday NHS clinical questions and priorities. Fellows will devote 60% of their time to this component. Fellows will undertake the Faculty taught doctoral research-training programme together with other related learning relevant to their PhD project. The broad doctoral research topic will fit with the Faculty Research Group themes and has been agreed between the University and NHS organisations. Doctoral supervisors from the University will supervise Fellows.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How are payments made to the Fellow during the fellowship?

The Fellow will usually be paid a tax-free stipend of **£14,000** per annum and the university pays this quarterly. It includes an annual increment after year one in line with Agenda for Change band 5 percentage increments, pro rata. The university also pays the fees throughout the four-year fellowship.

2. Where will the Fellow be based?

The Fellow will be located in the agreed clinical area. They will also be able to use hot desks in the Clinical Academic Facilities at the University of Southampton at Southampton General Hospital and Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth for academic work. The academic space will also include the hot desks in the Post Graduate Research (PGR) rooms in buildings 45 and 67 on the main University Campus.

3. How is the time spent between the academic and clinical work during the 4 years of the programme?

This will depend on the Fellow's clinical and academic training needs and the needs of the clinical area. The working model will be decided between the University, NHS organisation and the Fellow. All newly qualified fellows **usually** undertake 6 months full time clinical work to consolidate clinical training, then 2 and 3 clinical and academic days respectively finishing with 6 months academic work. Fellows with more than one year's post qualified experience will usually undertake 2 and 3 clinical and academic days per week for four years.

4. Will the Fellow have a mentor?

We know from a recent commissioned evaluation of the clinical doctoral fellowship scheme it is important for each fellow to have a clinical and or academic mentor who is usually not the clinical manager or academic supervisor. The mentor needs to be identified with the

Fellow and clinical team the Clinical Academic Coordinator informed when decided.

5. How will the Fellow know if progress is being made and the expectations of both academic and clinical supervisors are being met?

Throughout the fellowship progress will be carefully monitored against set objectives and deadlines by both academic and clinical supervisors/mentors and the Fellow. The MPhil/PhD programme also has a set of three doctoral milestones that will need to be completed in first year (negotiated if 100% clinical in first 6 months). These milestones are designed to provide Fellows with more structure and support within their programme and are viewed by the postgraduate research team and supervisors as a helpful way to guide student progress. The Fellow will also have 6 monthly progress meetings with clinical and academic supervisors together. The University has recently launched a new web-based workflow management system for all doctoral Fellows and their supervisors to complete tasks and track their progress through their research degree timeline. This is called PGR Tracker and will be a good source for the Fellow to track progress and store all your documents and reports.

Each Fellow will usually meet their academic supervisors monthly. Fellows working 100% for the first 6 months should be permitted monthly “keeping in touch” days with supervisors.

We also know from the evaluation the tri-partite meetings (Fellow, clinical manager and academic supervisors) are very effective for tracking progress and “demystifying” the process. Each Fellow will arrange these twice a year (6 and 12 months). It would be very suitable to use the NHS appraisal process and documentation to guide this process as appropriate although University documentation will be completed.

6. Will the Fellow have to work shifts and night duty? If so, will they be able to claim for unsocial hours?

Yes, the Fellow may be required to work unsocial hours during clinical work but this requirement will be agreed with the clinical manager to ensure the Fellow is able to attend academic days. Unsocial hours can be claimed for; see section 7 for the claim process.

7. If the Fellow travels to patients' homes or clinics as part of the clinical work can they claim for mileage costs?

Yes, The Fellow is able to claim for clinical travel (i.e. from NHS organisation to community setting/patient home).

8. How does the Fellow claim for unsocial hours worked and clinical travel?

There is an agreed process for unsocial hours and clinical travel claims. Fellows are not able to claim travel from home to the university or the NHS organisation. This funding does not affect the annual consumables budget.

9. How much annual leave does the Fellow have?

This is detailed in section 61 of the University Of Southampton Code Of Practice for Research Candidature and Supervision and is usually up to 8 weeks but must be agreed with clinical and academic supervisors.

10. How long is the funded fellowship?

Funding has been awarded for 4 years only. The Fellow is a full time PhD student and needs to ensure the PhD is completed within the funded period.

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